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A

COMPARISON

OF

THE GOOD AND THE EVIL

OF

REVIVALS.

BY EZRA S. GANNETT.

SECOND EDITION.

PRINTED FOR THE

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REVIVALS.

It is an inquiry of considerable importance, whether the revivals which are countenanced and promoted by very numerous sects of Christians — by those generally who having first arrogated in its just sense, are now permitted to retain as a mere badge of distinction, the name of Orthodox — whether these revivals are useful. Do they do good or harm? — or both? — and of which the more? I shall endeavor to discuss these questions with candor and a single desire to present the results of fair examination.

It is not necessary to occupy time in describing one of these seasons, or in explaining my idea of the meaning conveyed by the term *revival* in the theology of the day. My interpretation of it will appear from the remarks which will be offered, and if they should be in any degree inconsistent with the popular sense of the word, or with the facts which reading and observation may have presented to the mind of any one, they will be considered so far irrelevant or unsound.

I would only observe, as a suitable introduction to what will follow, that I regard this as a strictly *technical* term; for it is used to designate something out of the course of most men's experience, peculiar, professional, — and artificial, inasmuch as particular means devised by

human ingenuity, and forced into action according to prescribed rules or for a special purpose, are brought to bear upon a community. There is a *science* of revivals, and it may be studied in the books; to produce and conduct one properly is an *art*, which must be learned by practice. I say this without any desire of creating a prejudice, but as a simple fact, which neither advocate nor opposer will deny.

These excitements seem to me neither wholly bad, nor wholly good. There is a mixture of truth and error in the doctrine of revivals; we may approve in part, and we must in part condemn their management; and unquestionable benefit and positive evil are seen in their results. It will be my aim to distinguish and exhibit these several views. Let us first look on the more pleasant side — on what is true, good, and beneficial.

There is some truth in the *doctrine* of revivals. It is true that men are sinners, that most men are habitually indifferent to their religious state, and that those who are sunk in vice or devoted to this world must be aroused to a sense of their condition. It is true that religion is the one thing needful, indescribably important to the individual and to society, and that we should use proper means for interesting our friends and neighbors in this subject. It is true that prayer is efficacious, that social prayer is a duty and a privilege, and that we ought to remember others in our intercessions to the Father of mercies. It is true that sympathy is an aid to virtue, that it may be innocently and advantageously employed to impress the heart or startle the conscience. It is true that the sinner must be convinced and converted before he can be saved, that if his heart is wedded to earth it

must be divorced, that if his character is corrupt it must be changed, that if his life is immoral it must be renovated. It is true that some persons have been, and others may be suddenly brought to an acquaintance with themselves, be filled with shame and grief, and through the agony of their repentance effect in a short time their deliverance from the habits of sensual thought and feeling, in which years of wickedness had bound them. (It is as true however, let me here add lest I should seem to fall into contradiction, that such instances are rare.) It is true that God has promised his spirit in answer to prayer, that we need it, and that it co-operates with the sinner's own exertions in securing for him the mastery over his evil propensities. And finally, it is true that circumstances of divine providence may concur with human arrangements, or may suggest to Christians the duty of putting into efficient operation the means of private or social improvement; in other words, it is certain that both individuals and societies are more disposed to receive and obey the influence of religion at some seasons than at others. — All this is true; as I should suppose, obviously and indisputably true. Let these principles be avowed — they scarcely need be defended among Christians; let them be adopted in practice; and if in their lawful and just use they produce a revival, then God be praised; the fruit is good, the tree is sound, and is of God's own planting in the garden of life.

There is something to approve in the *management* of revivals; not much, however, in what may be strictly called their management. It is important that the awakened sinner should find sympathy, else he may

relapse into unconcern; it is important that he should have facilities of seeking light and peace, else he may be discouraged; it is important that friends should frankly discover their interest in his situation, else he may be prevented by shame or timidity from asking their counsel. — I confess I can say nothing more than is expressed in these general terms, of the manner in which revivals are maintained. I do not like the unseasonable prayer-meeting; the crowded conference-room where excitement is stimulated by violent means; the public display that exposes to admiration the subjects of a work, which, if it be genuine and they be in the calm exercise of their minds, must make them shrink from the gaze of men; nor the secret conversations, the extravagant statements, the busy plans, and the artificial contrivances by which it is attempted to prolong the excitement. I cannot approve of these things; and yet they constitute much the larger part of what may be styled the machinery of a revival. To fervent prayer, to affectionate exhortation, to plain and pungent preaching, God forbid that we should feel an objection. Rather let such methods be recommended and used, and by divine grace may they be made successful.

There is also much that we delight to behold in the *results* of these revivals. Who must not rejoice when the transgressor is convinced of the evil of his way, when the selfish heart is cleansed of its wickedness, and the stubborn will is bowed in humiliation and trust before the gracious majesty of God? Who must not be glad to hear of the triumphs of divine truth and heavenly love, when the blasphemy of the scoffer is changed into the prayer for forgiveness, or the skeptic repeats with gratitude the lan-

guage of the believer; when age that had refused to rest on the arm of almighty protection celebrates the power on which alone it can rely, or youth flies to the refuge which religious principle opens amidst the temptations of life; when vice is rebuked, and profligacy is driven to hide itself in shame; when the spirit of worldliness is subdued, and its energies are for a season quenched; when men are made better, and God is more obeyed, and Christ more loved, who that has a Christian's heart will not be glad and rejoice? Shall there be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, and shall not the disciples of Jesus on earth observe with delight the conversion of the impenitent, and the increase of whatever amount of goodness may exist among the children of men? I believe revivals have produced these effects in greater or less degrees; I believe that they may be instrumental in the production of such results; and so far as they promote the cause of human salvation, for which God sent his Son and that Son gave himself to death, so far I am bound by my faith, by my integrity, by my charity, to approve of them and to acknowledge their benefits.

Having said so much in favor of revivals, it may seem that I must admit their utility. But I have asserted that they present a mixture of truth and error, of good and evil, of advantage and mischief; and it is only after a comparison of the one side with the other in these several relations, that we can determine on which lies the preponderance, and whether it is our duty to encourage or to discountenance them.

There is error, I repeat, in the *doctrine* of revivals. We have noticed some of the principles on which they are supported. The great truths of religion are their basis; but as in a building the frame-work constitutes a more intimate part of the structure than the foundation, and upon the nature of the materials there used will depend the value of the edifice, so in a revival other doctrines than the fundamental principles are brought into use, which have a more close connexion with the result, and from the character of which we can best judge concerning the whole system.

Of these doctrines, the first is the dogma of universal radical corruption. Every man is supposed to be supremely wicked, unless he has experienced a change of heart. You will be satisfied of the justice of this remark, when you observe that it does not touch any opinion about the *origin* of sin, and that it points out the doctrine of most immediate and practical importance in the whole economy of a revival. If a person have not passed through a conversion which has given him an entirely new character, he is regarded as a subject for the excitement, and for such as he it is intended and fostered. Now this notion that all men need such a change I deem to be false, destitute of proof from Scripture and contradicted by facts. There are many who do not need to become in a spiritual sense new creatures, for they are already children of God; but how they became such neither they nor any one else can tell, except that it was by the silent influence of education or self-discipline. Some of them were sanctified from earliest childhood, and in others the religious character gained expansion and strength as circumstances favored

its growth. To proceed on the presumption that all men must pass through similar states of mind, denominated successively awakening, anxiety, conviction, conversion, hope, justification, assurance, and joy, is to commence with an error that will taint all subsequent measures. It opens the way for an abuse of scriptural language; and at the same time gives currency to expressions of a coarse stamp as signs of the holiest exercises, and men talk of 'getting religion,' of 'having a hope,' and of 'meeting with a change,' after the same manner as they talk in their secular affairs of receiving news and making arrangements of business. Hence arises much of the *cant* of religion, and most of the monotony which distinguishes its existence among large bodies of Christians. Starting from the same point, treading in each other's steps, taught to notice the same prospects, and even to utter the same exclamations of horror, penitence and rapture, the converts under this system more resemble animals who are moved by a common instinct or guided by a foreign will, than men asserting a high prerogative, the capacity of self-amendment.

A second doctrine of which great use is made at these seasons, but which I deem both false and pernicious, is that God is more gracious at one time than at another. The assembly are told that an opportunity is afforded them, which if they lose they seal their own condemnation. They are urged with the utmost vehemence of entreaty not to let the favorable moment escape, but to seize on the mercy which is now extended to them. If it be said that nothing more is meant by those who address these persuasions to the sinner than that present circumstances are better adapted to impress or

assist him than may again arise for a long period or even during his life, we reply that this is not understood to be the meaning; nor when we consider the manner in which such expressions as 'clouds of mercy,' 'showers of grace,' 'seasons of refreshing' are used, can we believe that it is expected that this will be understood to be the meaning. The effect upon those who have not examined these subjects, — upon children and the vast majority of adults, is to fix in their minds notions which represent God as an inconstant or capricious Being, which violate the truth that he is always waiting to be gracious, and exhibit him to the eye of timid faith as coming out at times from the recesses of his infinite majesty to cast a look of compassion upon a particular community. Then is the hour for repentance. No delay may be allowed, lest the Holy One should have withdrawn his pitiful regards, and left the sinner in hopeless misery. I am shocked at the language used on this subject. Though I doubt not the piety of those who adopt it, in my ears it sounds like blasphemy. It is unjust to God, false to the gospel, and injurious to man.

A third doctrine practically inculcated by such revivals, if it be not taught in express terms, is the doubtful and dangerous opinion, that we can distinguish the operations of the divine spirit from the effects of human agency and the influence of circumstances. It is a doubtful opinion, as the most favorable view of the argument for its truth must show; and the whole history of religion proves it to be a dangerous tenet. Indeed, unless we deny to man the ability of discriminating between special and ordinary influence, I know not how society can be secured against the grossest fanaticism. But

what is the familiar language of revivals? The influence of the divine spirit is described, its effusion is announced, and its effects are narrated in terms that make one shudder. The absurdity of enthusiasm and the coolness of calculation meet in the same sentence. The doctrine of spiritual influence — one of the most precious disclosures of revelation, the source of hope to the contrite, of comfort and joy to the obedient — is held up in such a light as to make it not only ludicrous, but positively offensive to good taste, common sense and a piety which is jealous as it ought to be of the divine honor. Who can read most of the narratives of revivals, even when conducted in the least exceptionable manner, and not be grieved at the freedom with which the writers speak of the agency of God in the work? It amazes me that men can so presumptuously tread where angels might be afraid to approach. They treat the sacred topics of our religion with as little apparent reverence, as was shown to the holy vessels of Jewish worship by the king of Babylon, who used them at the banqueting of his nobles.

I will only observe farther in this connexion, that the inconsistency into which the advocates of revivals are betrayed may be accounted an argument against them. It is a favorite and essential opinion that the excitement is from Heaven — is the work of the Spirit; deny this and you strike a fatal blow. Yet with this doctrine on their lips, they put in operation a course of measures calculated and sufficient to produce all the effects which are witnessed. What can exceed the variety, or surpass the ingenuity of the methods which are used for accomplishing their purpose, or the industry with which they

are applied. It is not only unphilosophical, but without warrant from Scripture or religion to introduce divine agency when adequate human means are in exercise. I am not surprised at the number of those who are affected in these seasons, but rather that converts are not counted by hundreds instead of tens. Look at the immense force which is brought into direct action upon the mind of the conscious offender, the ignorant but greedy listener, the susceptible female, the child whose law is obedience and whose habit is imitation; and how can any one fail to expect great apparent results? Who can wonder, when admission to the church is on the one hand the privilege only of those who have obtained a new heart, and is on the other considered as the seal and certificate of their having experienced the change, who can wonder that the churches receive at such times a vast increase of members?

There is but one argument in support of the doctrine that these scenes are the fruits of supernatural influence, which deserves to be noticed. Allusion is made to the day of Pentecost, and it has been said, with too little reverence for that occasion, that it was the first revival. How different were the circumstances. In the one case, man did almost nothing and God did almost everything—sensibly, visibly, miraculously; in the other, man does everything and leaves nothing for divine operation, and if God acts it is without any visible token. In the one case prophecy was fulfilled, a series of miracles confined to the apostolic age was commenced, and a new religion was lifted into its victorious chariot amidst the trophies of its first success; in the other case there is no special call for divine interposition, and no reason for

expecting it, the salvation of the sinner having been left to the ordinary means of grace. In the one case, the effect could not be ascribed to the human instruments that were employed; in the other, it would be almost miraculous if the effects which are witnessed were not produced by the human instruments that are employed.

And now, in regard to the *management* of revivals; I remark that there is not only much of it, but much that is objectionable.

The use which is made of terror seems to me a strong ground of objection. If the excitements in this immediate neighborhood were alone under our notice, there might not be occasion for the remark. In this region so great respect is paid to the intelligence of the people, or so correct views of the gospel are entertained by the advocates of revivals, that the passion of fear is not often urged beyond the limits of propriety. But in the villages and towns of the interior, and in other parts of the country, a most unjustifiable—a wicked use of this principle has been a great means of impression. The terrors of divine justice, the horrors of immediate retribution, the agonies of eternal misery, have been presented in images that must overwhelm reason in alarm, unless by familiarity with them it should learn to disregard both the image and the substance. Oh, it is most sad, to read authentic accounts of the addresses and prayers, which are poured forth in tones of thunder. Those lines of Watts, that one can hardly repeat without trembling—

> My thoughts on awful subjects roll,
> Damnation and the dead—

describe the character of the preaching, the spirit of the devotional exercises, the general aspect and influence

of the occasion. Hell is the beginning and end of the exhortation, the familiar sound, even in the ears and from the tongues of little children!

I gladly leave this topic, to notice another cause of dissatisfaction with the management of these scenes, — the mechanical character impressed upon them. It has been already observed, that to create and conduct a revival has become an art to be studied, and one in which as in other arts practice will make perfect. This is strictly true. For the last five or six years particularly, methods have been tried and the results compared, with a view to discover that course of measures which unites certainty, rapidity, and extent of execution with the least degree of mischievous tendency or unhappy effect. As these experiments and comparisons approach their object, a more narrow uniformity of proceeding is observed, by which individual freedom must be restrained, and the religious life, at least in its earlier stages, be reduced to a slavish compliance with rules of human origin. Look over the list of meetings, study the phrases, watch the progress of a revival, and see how artificially the conversion of a sinner is treated: note how mechanical are the several movements; how systematic are all the proceedings; how deliberately and methodically Christians undertake to 'get up' a revival. I say it in perfect simplicity of heart, that no arrangements of a political party are more regular or complete or better understood by the leaders, than the means of producing a religious excitement. All this array of means, this mechanism, this artificial process, is opposed to one of the first principles of our religion — freedom — the free exercise by every one of his own faculties in the study and

application of Christian truth. Men may indeed be converted by these methods, but we have no right to break down the liberty of a single mind; we have no right to make religion formal and heavy; we may not do wrong to confer good.

Another unpleasant feature of this management is the excessive use of sympathy. That we should act on one another in spiritual as in other concerns, no one will deny. But we must not in the exercise of this influence unjustly control the choice or action of the individual. We may not do this on any subject, but least of all in religion, which is emphatically a personal interest. And if we may not exert such control against the will of another, neither may we take advantage of circumstances which shall blind him to our purpose, and enable us to bring him into a subjection not the less real because its nature is misunderstood. Religious character should have a natural and independent growth. In these excitements the mind is thrown off its guard, is despoiled of its self-possession, is taken captive through the aid of influences which have been raised for this purpose. To say that the captive is laid at the foot of the cross is only to allege that souls are brought to Christ in a way which he does not approve — that the end sanctifies the means. So has persecution argued in every age, and the plea will excuse violence as well as indirect force. Sympathy is indirect force, when it rises to such a degree as to deprive one of clear judgment or to impose on him a false motive. Is it not both unwise and wrong to place much reliance on such means of impression?

Once more, in the conduct of these revivals I cannot approve of the submission which is rendered to the

judgment and will of the clergy. It is often said, that the dominion of the clergy is broken, — the days have gone by, when an implicit respect was paid to their opinion. It seems to me that in the rules which have been laid down for the management of a revival and in the alacrity with which they are followed, we have intimations of a power as absolute, (though it may be now more cautiously exercised,) as any which was felt in former times. The explanation, I conceive, of the number and extent of recent revivals is to be found in the fact, that for some years past a system has been gradually matured, which puts the church into the hands of its ministers, and makes the private members prompt and stedfast in obedience to their dictation. Hence it has been declared, and I believe with truth, that in the societies which are placed under this system any minister who chooses may have a revival. Let him announce his purpose to a few confidential friends; let them spread the design through the body of the communicants; let the machinery of an excitement be brought by 'the church' to bear upon the congregation, and the result is as certain as any moral result can be. If this plain speaking should expose the character of the work, I can only repeat that my desire is to exhibit the truth, and that though I believe this system is suited to gratify the taste of an ambitious or to promote the plans of a bad minister, yet I do not entertain the least doubt that they by whose labor it has been prepared, and by whose example it is recommended, are in general sincere, upright, and pious men, who think they are serving God and their Master, and conferring essential benefits on their fellow-men. But let us discourage every attempt to establish a power incon-

sistent with the open exercise of thought and will by the people. Let the minister's arguments, persuasions, and character have their proper influence on them, of whom he is not more the teacher than the servant; but let not the clergy be permitted to employ the people as mere instruments in executing plans which, however honestly undertaken, are calculated to fasten upon them the chains of spiritual power. Or if we must have a hierarchy, let it come in the pomp and pretensions of the Catholic Church, and not in the humble garb of Congregationalism. The inconsistency is too gross; the one brings us too near to the simplicity and freedom of the gospel to allow us to endure the other.

It would not be difficult to specify other characteristics in the management of revivals, which expose them to suspicion. But I leave them, to notice, in the last place, what must be pronounced the bad *effects* of revivals.

The first that occurs, is the continuance and spread in the community of those false views of the divine character and agency, which we considered the frame-work of a revival. These views are held up before the careless, to arouse them; before the anxious, to deepen the impression made on their consciences or their sensibilities; before the hopeful, to establish them in principles which are deemed important; and before the converted or the pious, to remind them of their own experience, and to suggest to them what should be the nature of their conversation with others. Moreover, as these doctrines are essential to a revival, they are not only taught during the excitement, but at other times in anticipation of this season, to prepare men for it and thus to accelerate its approach. Erroneous apprehensions are by these means

interwoven with the whole texture of the Christian's faith; and children receive with confidence what their parents and teachers admit among the articles of their own belief. A vast amount of injury is done to the cause of truth, and obstacles are raised against the progress of light and the increase of human happiness.

A second mischievous effect is seen in the currency given to the notion, that religion consists mainly in excitement. The season is denominated one of *peculiar* interest in religion; the places of worship are crowded; christian ordinances are celebrated with special solemnity; prayers are multiplied and prolonged; the common arrangements of life wear an unusual aspect; all tends to confirm the belief, that religion is something peculiar and extraordinary. One who was ignorant of its nature would suppose, that it lay in strong feeling and was sustained by violent means. The truth, that it consists in the conscientious discharge of small duties and is best cultivated amidst the common relations of life, under its domestic and social circumstances and its perpetual discipline, could scarcely enter the mind of a spectator. They who share in the excitement must be particularly exposed to false impressions; and as they are the prominent examples of the christian character, and are presumed to be best acquainted with its nature, while they are also most active in disseminating opinions on the subject, they must have great influence in fixing this error in the public mind.

A kindred effect may be noticed in the tendency to extravagance which, as it characterizes all these measures, distinguishes also the lives and writings of their friends. Having overstepped the bounds of simplicity,

there is no other limit than what the condition of society in which they live may impose. Hence, as was noticed, a revival in one part of the country will be marked by gross indecorum, while in another, where public sentiment is more correct or is more feared, the same principles will be carried into practice in a less objectionable manner. Yet here the *tendency* is to the wildest extravagance; elements are kindled which may easily be blown into a flame that will spread desolation over the charities and valuable interests of life. It is a fearful exposure of the character to place it in the midst of such elements.

A farther effect that may be observed, particularly in connexion with this last, is an indisposition to the familiar duties of life. They are too simple and common; they do not gratify the thirst for excitement which has become a part of the character. Home is accounted a dull place, domestic pleasures are tame, domestic occupations tedious, to be good in a quiet way and to mature one's virtue under the single eye of Heaven appears spiritless; there must be more action, more change, more foreign impulse. How lamentably true is this description! How many families have been robbed of their peace by this spirit of religious excitement. How many duties, as plain and sacred as nature could make them, have been neglected. How much occasion has been given for repeating the Saviour's reproof of the Pharisees, 'ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin' — ye observe the outward forms of religion, 'and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy and fidelity.'

Among the positive evils of this system its effect upon the character of those who fall under its power deserves a more particular mention than has yet been taken of it.

Besides the severe and unrighteous distress which it occasions to many delicate minds, some of whom it drives to habitual melancholy, despair, and even insanity, it fosters spiritual pride, produces injustice, and hinders improvement. From first to last its object is to degrade human nature and to exalt the individual. This is not treating the one kindly, nor the other fairly. Proper respect is not paid to the capacities of the soul, and the mind, while it is defrauded of a just confidence in its native abilities, may be swollen by the belief that it is a favorite of heaven and a recipient of special divine influence. The whole series of measures adopted for the conversion of sinners, of those, that is, who have not previously been smitten by these weapons of spiritual warfare, may not be intended but it is admirably adapted to blind the understanding and to inflate the heart with self-conceit. Let me, in support of this remark, direct attention to a single feature in the management of recent revivals.

Meetings are announced to be holden for several days. The nature of these occasions is this. After the excitement has become deep and general, and the moment has arrived for making some grand attempt, the people among whom the flame has been kindled are placed under this coercive discipline. For several successive days public meetings are held, in which prayers are offered and sermons delivered, of a character suited to effect the object in view. These meetings are attended not once nor twice only but three or four times in each day, and the intervals are occupied by other meetings in which the people are distributed according to their state from impenitence to confident piety, and in which per-

sonal exhortation and services by private individuals are substituted for the more formal discourses of the pulpit. By this alternation of principal and subsidiary meetings the day from early morning to late evening is consumed. This course is pursued through three, four, and in some instances through nine days, during which time the mind is not allowed to snatch a season of repose or of independent action, but is kept under the strongest foreign impulse. — Consider for a moment the injustice of this method of converting souls. Anticipate also the probable effects. To me this seems the most effectual instrument that could have been invented for securing a triumph over the community. When by other means the people have been brought to a sufficient height of excitement this engine is applied, till the subject, unless he have physical and mental nerves of hardier texture than is common in our susceptible nature, must be subdued and either in a fever of enthusiasm or under the exhaustion of fatigue must resign himself to the force of circumstances. It is like taking the iron when softened by heat and subjecting it at once to the continued action of the fire and the blows of the workmen, who relieve each other till the metal is beaten into the shape they may wish to give it. Is this a proper treatment for the mind? Is it a just or an honorable method, after depriving it of the opportunity of exercising its free judgment and will, to *force* it into holiness? I do not mean to use an expression in any degree stronger than is deserved, as I am anxious to produce no effect but that of conviction founded on truth. The only important difference between these meetings and the favorite practice of the Methodists, which the Congregationalists

and Presbyterians have been wont to condemn, lies in the place of assembling, a house made by human hands instead of some spot in nature's temple. Such meetings are exactly suited to secure their object — the increase of disciples to a particular church; but they are in effect unjust to the reason, the conscience, and the dearest rights of the individuals whom they oppress — the right of thinking freely on religious subjects, and the right, inseparable from the duty, of working out one's own salvation. What an injury must be done to the mind that is made to endure this treatment!

I said that spiritual pride was also a fruit of these excitements. It may not always appear, but it is a natural consequence of the manner in which the people are divided and described, of the doctrine from which are drawn the hope and belief of regeneration, of the language commonly used respecting the unconverted, and of the employment assigned to the converted both in private visits and in public meetings. Young persons, who are most easily infected with vanity, are exposed to these influences; and often betray a consciousness of superiority, as little accordant with their merits as with the christian temper. There is also danger, as the provocations to this sin are augmented, that pride will become the vice of the church. Preaching is at such times addressed principally to 'sinners' in distinction from Christians, or to the latter not to remind them of their ordinary duties or offences, but to urge them to make greater efforts for the conversion of others who are not in their condition. It is a fact worthy of careful consideration by the friends of these excitements, that they are usually accompanied or followed by uncharitableness,

bigotry, injurious reports, and domestic dissensions. Self-complacency grows with little culture, and under almost any sky; let it be put under circumstances so strongly favorable to its expansion as exist in times of revivals, and it will run up into a coarse and offensive weed. I fear — I more than fear — I believe, that in many instances these circumstances have given rise to 'debates, envyings, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings' of the heart with self-love, and disorders in families, churches and towns.

But the excitement cannot continue for an indefinite period. Sooner or later, indeed ere long it must subside, and then comes the trial which certainly not all, probably not many, are able to sustain. The mind that had been suddenly lifted into fervor sinks into apathy; the repentance that expressed itself in cries and tears has worn out its strength in its violence; the piety that rose to the vigor of manhood in a day dies from its premature developement. That there are blessed exceptions has been already acknowledged. Some persons, in whom religion has been forced into a rapid growth by artificial means, are able to bear the subsequent trials of life; and so some plants may be removed from the hothouse in which they were brought to early maturity into the open air without injury. But they are few. There have been many sad instances of relapse into habits of vice, and I believe it is always expected that some of the converts on these occasions will apostatize from their profession.

But it is a yet more serious evil, because one of frequent occurrence, that as the force of the immediate cause decreases the interest in religion subsides, till it

reaches the level of the general opinions and customs of society. The religion of most persons who are converted in times of excitement is afterwards stationary. We do not observe in them the progress, which is the true test of christian character. And indeed why should we expect it? The great point is secured, the change is accomplished, an experience has been had, a hope obtained, the individual's name been registered among the pious, and the necessary effect of the doctrines inculcated is the belief that he is in a state of at least comparative safety. There certainly is reason to believe that such notions have been cherished, and it cannot be necessary to show how prejudicial they must be to improvement.

This unhappy effect is not confined to individual character; communities suffer. It is a matter of familiar observation, that a town which has been visited by such an excitement relapses into a state of indifference, from which it is more difficult to raise the people than before it had been the scene of a revival. This is a natural result. The exhausted powers crave repose. There is too a reaction of feeling, which carries men towards the opposite extreme. When they have been withdrawn from their accustomed employments by extravagant means, they return to them with avidity and prosecute them with new satisfaction. It is often found that a place declines in sentiment and morals after one of these seasons of strong emotion — emotion which must be transient because it is violent.

An evil incidental to revivals, and one which from the extent of its consequences should be noticed here even at the expense of repetition, is the sanction given to a particular phraseology, which, in itself disagreeable

if not false, has become, from the associations connected with it and the abuse to which it is liable among the ignorant and the derision heaped upon it by the wicked, decidedly objectionable. No one can have read the notices of revivals in the religious journals of the country, particularly if they are given in extracts from private letters, without being alike grieved and disgusted at the language chosen for the communication of facts proceeding according to the writer's belief directly from the divine agency. They are ludicrous, they are silly, they are irreverent. Yet the sameness of expression that runs through these narratives cannot escape observation; so that it has been said with almost as much truth as severity, that after an omission of the names and dates they appear as copies of the same pattern. The interests of religion suffer in consequence, as it leads men to question its reality or to speak of it as an imposition upon the credulity of the simple.

From this point we are naturally led to one other result of these revivals, which should be mentioned, since it is the most painful to contemplate and yet the most certain to follow. Some scoffers I have acknowledged are put to silence, but others find materials for their blasphemies against religion. Some sinners are converted, but others are hardened. Some souls are won to Christ, but others are driven to skepticism. Here also is presented a remarkable fact, which stands in contrast with a maxim true in perhaps every other connexion. In other cases the good is but partially known, the evil is notorious; but here all the good is seen and proclaimed, while much of the evil may be unobserved. No one can be stirred to repentance and it be kept from the

public view, the convert is forced into notice by the circumstances of his situation ; but many may be confirmed in incredulity or opposition, who seem to be only indifferent. Never can the amount of injury be computed ; never can it be told how many wounds have been given to religion in the house of her friends. Still there is abundant evidence to prove, that the ranks of infidelity and irreligion have been indebted for an increase of their numbers to the extravagant language and conduct that have distinguished revivals.

If now, in looking at the *results* of these excitements, we consider the apostacy to which they give occasion, the apathy by which they are followed, the injury which they inflict on the character of their supporters, and the disgust which they create in a vast number of spectators, to say nothing of the countenance that they give to erroneous opinions, we must pronounce their utility to be in this view at least doubtful.

We are now prepared to answer the questions — Are revivals useful ? Do they do good or harm ? — or both ? — and of which the more? If the remarks that have been made are just, we shall reply that they do more harm than good, and therefore cannot be pronounced useful. To sum up these remarks in a single paragraph ; we believe that they have done good, that they will do good, I had almost said that they must do good; I should be unwilling to suppose that so much sincere effort for the salvation of men would be wholly wasted. But we also believe that they have done harm, and that they must do harm, and occasion an amount of evil which greatly outweighs the benefit which results from them. We believe

that they propagate false notions respecting God's character and agency, and concerning the nature and duty of man; that they are the fruits of human skill, effort and co-operation, and that therefore they are erroneously ascribed to the divine spirit; that in the methods used to produce and extend them we discover much that is exceptionable; that they exert an unhappy influence upon the minds and hearts of those who are engaged in them; that they interfere with the happiness and order of life; that they are often attended by an increase of wickedness in the irreligious, and are generally followed by a decline of piety and a relaxed tone of morals in the places which they visit; that at least they are peculiarly liable to be abused, and multiply the tendencies to evil which exist in the world; and that they increase the number of scoffers and of unbelievers. For these reasons we must disapprove of them and think it our duty to speak against them in the language of truth and soberness.

To urge the doctrine by which an attempt is sometimes made to silence objectors, that the salvation of a soul is worth any price, is to resort to an unworthy artifice. We admit that many souls may be the trophies of a revival, but we think we have reason for affirming that many more souls are injured, perhaps lost through their effects. We believe that they distort the character, impair the proper influence, and actually lessen the triumphs of religion. They perpetuate error, and error is noxious; they prevent good, and this is equivalent to the production of evil. 'But they bring souls to heaven,' you repeat; yes, and the tempest, which lashes the ocean and strews it with wrecks, carries here and there a single vessel more swiftly to its port.

I have objected to some part of the doctrine of revivals, to the greater part of their management, and to a large portion of their results. Take these away, and what is left? The simple truths of Christianity, the legitimate means of influence, and whatever is valuable in effect. Between these may be traced a natural and holy connexion. The plain truths of the gospel and the lawful instruments of persuasion, let them be united, and they will secure the happiest results. Exhibit the divine character in its majesty and loveliness, unfold the proofs of compassion in God our Father, and of benevolence in Christ our Saviour, pourtray in lines of truth the excellence of virtue, describe in pathetic language the mischiefs of sin, reason with a man as your equal, expostulate with him as your friend, instruct him by your own blameless life, and you may touch those sensibilities of his nature which are the elements of an everlasting and progressive goodness. Here will be nothing artificial, mechanical or extravagant. If you should be successful, you will have unmingled satisfaction; and if you should meet with disappointment, you will have the solace of knowing that your attempt has not been productive of evil.

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AN

ANSWER TO THE QUESTION,

WHY ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?

By JOHN CLARKE, D. D.

SECOND EDITION.

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THE Rev. Dr JOHN CLARKE, the author of the following tract, was a pastor of the First Church in Boston, from 1778 to 1798, when he died at the age of 43. The 'Answer' contains a more perspicuous and satisfactory statement of the leading evidences of Christianity than can be found elsewhere within the same compass. Immediately on its appearance, it passed rapidly through several editions both in this country and in England. Of late years, however, it has been less known than it deserves, if it be not altogether out of print. The Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association have therefore concluded to incorporate it into their series of Tracts, in order that a treatise of such permanent value may be constantly before the public at a cheap rate.

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AN ANSWER, &c.

Introduction.

Not because I was born in a Christian country, and educated in Christian principles; — not because I find the illustrious Bacon, Boyle, Locke, Clarke, and Newton, among the professors and defenders of Christianity; — nor merely because the system itself is so admirably calculated to mend and exalt human nature: but because the evidence, accompanying the gospel, has convinced me of its truth. The secondary causes assigned by unbelievers, do not, in my judgment, account for the rise, progress, and early triumphs of the Christian religion. Upon the principles of skepticism, I perceive an effect without a cause. To my own reason, I therefore stand acquitted, though I continue to believe and profess the religion of Jesus Christ. Arguing from effects to causes, I think I have philosophy on my side; and reduced to a choice of difficulties, I encounter not so many, in admitting the miracles ascribed to the Saviour, as in the arbitrary suppositions and conjectures of his enemies.

That there once existed such a person as Jesus Christ; that he appeared in Judæa in the reign of Tiberius; that he taught a system of morals, superior to any inculcated in the Jewish schools; that he was crucified

at Jerusalem ; and that Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor, by whose sentence he was condemned and executed, are facts which no one can reasonably call in question. The most inveterate deists admit them without difficulty. And indeed, to dispute these facts would be giving the lie to all history. As well might we deny the existence of Cicero, as that of a person by the name of Jesus Christ ; and with equal propriety might we call in question the orations of the former, as the discourses of the latter. We are morally certain, that the one entertained the Romans with his eloquence, and that the other enlightened the Jews with his wisdom. But it is unnecessary to labor these points, because they are generally conceded. They who affect to despise the Evangelists and Apostles, profess to reverence Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny. And these eminent Romans bear testimony to several particulars, which relate to the person of Jesus Christ, his influence as the founder of a sect, and his crucifixion. From a deference to human authority, all therefore acknowledge, that the Christian religion derived its name from Jesus Christ. And many are so just to his merits, as to admit, that he taught better than Confucius, and practised better than Socrates or Plato.

But, I confess, my creed embraces many more articles. I believe, that Jesus Christ was not merely a teacher of virtue, but that he had a special commission to teach. I believe, that his doctrines are not the work of human reason, but divine communications to mankind. I believe, that he was authorized by God to proclaim forgiveness to the penitent ; and to reveal a state of immortal glory and blessedness to those who

fear God, and work righteousness. I believe, in short, the whole evangelic history, and by consequence, the divine original of Christianity, and the sacred authority of the gospel. Others may reject these things as the fictions of human art or policy: but I assent to them from a full conviction of their truth. The grounds of this conviction I shall assign in the course of this work; and I shall undertake to show why the objections of infidelity, though they have often shocked my feelings, have never yet shaken my faith.

To come then to the Question: *Why are you a Christian?* I answer, because the Christian religion carries with it internal marks of its truth; because not only without the aid, but in opposition to the civil authority, in opposition to the wit, the argument, and violence of its enemies, it made its way, and gained an establishment in the world; because it exhibits the accomplishment of some prophecies, and presents others which have been since fulfilled; and because its author displayed an example, and performed works which bespeak, not merely a superior, but a divine character. Upon these several facts I ground my belief as a Christian; and, till the evidence on which they rest can be invalidated by counter evidence, I must retain my principles and my profession.

Chap. 1. *The Internal Evidence of Christianity.*

First, I am a Christian, because the intrinsic excellency of Christianity points it out as a system worthy of my belief; because the laws which it prescribes, the spirit which it breathes, and the discoveries which it makes, are so admirably suited to the constitution and circumstan-

ces of man, that I cannot reject it. The preceptive part of Christianity has been very generally approved. And how is it possible, that any one should seriously object to laws, which tend to correct the errors, and reform the vices of human nature, and to exalt the character of man to the highest stage of moral perfection? If Christianity prescribed the austerities of the monk, the solitude of the hermit, or the wanderings of the pilgrim; if it even gave countenance to such extravagances, or allowed them the lowest degree of merit, I should esteem it a formidable objection to the system. But nothing of this description can be found in the writings of the Evangelists or Apostles. Those writings pour contempt upon all superstitious practices; and lead us to ascribe no value to any works, but those of true piety and virtue. They teach us to worship God in spirit and in truth; to love him supremely; to be grateful for his favors, and resigned to his dispensations; to trust in his mercy, and rejoice in his government. They teach us to dismiss all anxious cares and apprehensions; and having employed the means which infinite wisdom has appointed, to leave the event with infinite goodness. They teach us to love our neighbor as ourselves; to forgive him when he has injured us, to bear with his infirmities, and to excuse his follies; to weep with him in his distresses; when he is in want to afford him our assistance; and to do to him as we should think it fit and reasonable that he should do to us. They teach us to love even our enemies, so far at least as to abstain from revenge; and to render them offices of kindness, when their circumstances call for commiseration. They teach us to govern our appetites and passions, to be chaste, humble, temperate,

pure, and, as much as possible, to be like our Father in heaven, whose character is an assemblage of every natural and moral perfection. They teach children to reverence and obey their parents; and parents to love, instruct, and provide for their children. They teach the husband conjugal fidelity and affection; and the wife, the peculiar duties of her station, and the amiable virtues which adorn the sex, and bless the marriage union. They teach masters lenity, and servants faithfulness. They teach rulers to exercise their authority for the public good ; and persons in private life not to withhold honor and submission from those under whose wise and just administration they lead quiet and peaceable lives. In a word, the affluent and the poor, the prosperous and the afflicted, the aged and the young, may all find their duty in the sacred books. And the duties there enjoined, are such as the enlightened reason of every man must approve.

These sublime lessons of morality are found in various parts of the New Testament. They enrich the divine sermon on the mount. They are contained in the excellent parables delivered by Jesus Christ. I also find them in the discourses of the Apostles, and in their pastoral letters. I may say, wherever I open the Christian volume I find some direction, which, if properly observed, would render me a good neighbor, a good member of society, a good friend, and a good man. Is it then possible for me to doubt the divine original of a system which furnishes such rules, and contemplates so glorious an object ?

If the prohibitions of Jesus Christ were universally regarded, and his laws obeyed, what blessings would

pour in on society? There would be no wars among the nations of the earth. There would be no oppression. There would be neither tyrants nor slaves. Every ruler would be just; every citizen would be honest; every parent would be faithful to his charge; every child would be dutiful; the purest affection would recommend domestic life; and neighbors would be mutual blessings. Under the dominion of Christianity, envy, pride, and jealousy, would give way to the most enlarged benevolence. Human nature would recover its dignity; and every man would reap the present reward of his own virtues.

From these facts, others may draw their own conclusions: my inference is, that Christianity is true. I do not believe, that such a system of morals can be the work of human wisdom. That these laws originated with God, and that Jesus Christ was commissioned to promulgate them, appears to me a much more rational supposition. The more I inspect them, the less am I inclined to compliment human ingenuity with so glorious a production. If then I continue to believe, in this age of refinement and inquiry, it is because I am unable to resist the evidence arising from the transcendent excellency of the Christian precepts. I think it infinitely more probable, that they should be a communication from God, than that philosophy should justly claim the honor of the invention.

The doctrines of the Christian religion furnish an additional argument in its favor. They are such as appear worthy of God, and answerable to the natural expectations of men. The perfection of the Deity, his agency in the creation and government of the world, the condi-

tions of his approbation, the consequences, and a future state of existence, are points respecting which every reasonable being would wish for information. And it is a fact, that the New Testament throws divine light on all these articles. It informs us that there is One God; that he is infinitely holy, wise, benevolent, and just; that he is self-existent and independent; that his power is irresistible, and his presence universal; that he made and upholds all worlds; that he created the human species, and every inferior being; that he is, moreover, their preserver and benefactor; that he exercises a moral government over man; that he requires obedience to his laws, and consequently resents their infraction; that forgiveness is possible, and repentance and reformation the conditions; that death is not utter destruction; that all who die will live again; that all who are raised will be judged; and that there is a future state, in which vice will be punished according to its malignity, and in which virtue will shine with unfading lustre, and receive an everlasting reward. These are not useless speculations, but doctrines of infinite moment. They interest as well the heart as the understanding; and their influence extends both to our actions and our enjoyments.

It would be easy to produce the various passages in which these points are maintained: but it is unnecessary; as every one will allow them to be doctrines of Christianity. Whether the system be true or not, it certainly contains these articles. I would now put the question to every sober theist, whether I must renounce either my understanding or my creed? Is there anything incredible in this representation of God and man, of the demands

of the one, and the destination of the other? Must I offer an affront to my reason, if I believe in one God, exercising the authority and possessed of all the glorious attributes ascribed to him in the Christian writings? Does my understanding revolt from the evangelical account of his providence and moral government? That I should make it my study to obey him; when guilty of disobedience, that I should repent and reform; and that, as I behave, so I may expect to be treated; is there anything irrational in these doctrines? We read of a mediator, and a rich variety of blessings dispensed through him; and is not this agreeable to the established constitution of things in the world? Do not temporal mercies often flow to us through the mediation of others? May not many instances be produced, in which the political redemption of a nation has been accomplished by the labors, or purchased by the blood of some virtuous patriot? Is common sense insulted by the doctrine of a resurrection? This has been asserted; but with what reason I never could conceive. When I examine the power and wisdom of God, they do not appear incompetent to such an effect. When I consider the divine goodness, I see nothing in the resurrection of man irreconcilable with that perfection. When I reflect that God formed the human body, and inspired the breath of life, I can easily believe that he is able to raise us up at the last day. Before I can reject the resurrection of mankind, it must therefore be demonstrated, that the terms imply a contradiction.

As to a future state of retribution, I would ask, what presumption there is against it? We find that we have already experienced great changes. Since our first

introduction to this world, our active and intellectual powers have gained strength as we have advanced towards maturity : and why may we not hereafter possess them in higher perfection? Why may we not move, not merely in a new, but in a nobler sphere? As a moral government is evidently begun in this state, why may it not be completed in another? In these expectations, I think we are supported by the analogy of nature. As we have already existed in different states, new scenes may be in reserve for us ; and new capacities of action, enjoyment, and suffering may await us beyond the grave.

Combining the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, I am led then to infer from them the truth of the system. Because the former are so important and the latter so beneficial; because the doctrines of Christ tend to make us so wise, and his laws so good, I am, in a manner, compelled to receive them as divine. Such is their supreme excellence, that I must ascend to Heaven for an adequate cause. I assent, therefore, most unfeignedly to those words of our Saviour, 'my doctrine is not mine, but his who sent me.' I do also assert, that, if there were not other evidence that our religion is from God, it would still be more reasonable to admit its claims to a divine original, than to reject them.

Chap. 2. *Evidence arising from the early Triumphs of Christianity.*

My faith however as a Christian does not rest on this single foundation : I have other reasons for believing the gospel. The early triumphs of Christianity

furnish a second, and, in my view, a most weighty argument in support of my religion; and my conviction of its truth gains strength every time I examine its introduction, progress and establishment in the world. Recurring to the period of its infancy, I find that it made its way not only without the aid, but in opposition to the civil authority. I observe, that it rose superior to the wit, the argument, and the violence of its enemies. I perceive that it baffled the arts of the Jewish priests and rulers; and supported itself against the rage of the multitude. When Heathens became its enemies and persecutors, I find their opposition as ineffectual as that of the Jews. Though it was the contempt and derision of the more leading characters in society, yet I take notice that it gained a wonderful ascendency over the human mind; and at length became the religion of the Roman world. These are facts: and how am I to account for them, if Christianity be a mere fable?

I can easily believe, that an imposture may succeed, if it have the public prejudices, the learning, wealth, and influence of the country, or the sword of the magistrate on its side. I never wondered, that the attempts of Mahomet to establish his religion were crowned with success. When I peruse the Koran, and examine the materials of which it is composed; — when I observe how much the work is indebted to the Jewish and Christian revelations; — when I survey the particular part, which Mahomet, or his agents, supplied; — when I see, with how much art the whole is accommodated to the opinions and habits of Jews, Christians and Pagans; — when I consider what indulgences it grants, and what future scenes it unfolds; — when I advert to the peculiar

circumstances of the times when its author formed the vast design of assuming the royal and prophetic character; — and more than all, when I contemplate the reformer at the head of a conquering army, the Koran in one hand, and in the other a sword, — I cannot be surprised at the civil and religious revolution, which has immortalized his name. With his advantages, how could he fail of success? Everything favored the enterprise. The nation beheld a military apostle, and they, who were unconvinced by his arguments, trembled at his sword.

But did Jesus Christ have recourse to such measures in order to establish his religion? Was he a general, or his apostles soldiers? In proof of his divine mission, did he affront the reason of mankind, by appealing to the sword? Did the learning of the age come to his assistance? Did genius and eloquence plead his cause? Were the principles of his religion such as would easily captivate persons of figure and fashion? Would wealth be partial to them? It is granted, that the laws of Christianity are perfectly accommodated to the reasonable and moral nature of man; but did the habits of the age in which they were promulgated, predispose the public mind to receive those laws? Were the doctrines of the gospel consonant to prevailing and popular opinions? There is not a man, who has examined the life, the actions, and the religion of Jesus Christ, who will answer one of these queries in the affirmative.

In the whole compass of history, not any fact is better established than the pacific character of our great

Master, and the inoffensive measures, by which he prosecuted his cause. He proclaimed the truths, and inculcated the duties of his religion; but he used no violence to make men believe the one, or practise the other. He addressed himself to the reason of mankind; and then left them to make up their own judgment. At length, he suffered; and his cause devolved upon certain persons who had attended upon his ministry, and been witnesses of his actions. These persons, called Apostles, went forth into the world, and taught the same truths which they had learned from their master, and which he had sealed with his blood. In imitation of their great pattern, they likewise applied, not to the passions, but to the reason of the age. With the Jews, they argued on their own principles; and for the conviction of Gentiles they appealed to facts. Not one of their enemies ever pretended, that more formidable weapons were employed by the Apostles in the Christian cause. How then shall we account for their success? What induced several thousands of the Jewish nation to embrace Christianity? Why did such multitudes of the Gentile world forsake their superstitions, and receive the religion of the gospel?

Was Christianity a popular system? None could be less so. Did it open the way to a seat in the Sanhedrim, to the honors of the priesthood, or to an office under the Roman government? I never heard the insinuation. Was it an introduction to wealth or power? It was the very reverse. Did it flatter any of the ruling passions of the human heart, or permit their gratification? Every one, who has examined it, knows the contrary. If then, as the terms are generally understood, it was

neither honorable, profitable, nor popular; — if it was the derision of philosophy, and the contempt of learning; — if the wit of the age was exerted against it; —if the priesthood hated, and the magistrate persecuted it, to what cause am I to ascribe the prevalence of Christianity? Under all these disadvantages, what enabled it to keep its ground? Upon one principle only can I account for this fact to my own satisfaction, and that is, the truth of the system, and the patronage of Heaven. I can believe, that truth may triumph over the most formidable opposition; and that God is able to defend his own cause.

For every phenomenon in nature, there must be a sufficient reason. This is a doctrine of philosophy; and not only so, but a dictate of common sense. Taking this principle for granted, I therefore endeavor to account for the existence of Christianity. I find that the religion of Jesus is not coeval with many events preserved in history. By means of various records, which have escaped the ravages of time, I perceive that less than eighteen centuries will carry me back to the age in which this religion was first proposed to the world. By the confession of its enemies, it derived no support from the family connexions, outward circumstances, or fate of its author. So far from it, all these things operated against it. Jesus Christ, though a very excellent, was, in the estimation of the world, a very obscure person. His family, though once exalted, had fallen into decay; and his fate was as infamous as it was unmerited. His followers likewise, and those with whom he left his cause, were generally as obscure as their master. They had not wealth to give them im-

portance. They were not men in power; nor were their natural abilities, or literary attainments so great, as to give them a decided superiority over their enemies. It is certain, therefore, that Christianity did not owe its success to anything dazzling in the personal accomplishments or circumstances of its first preachers.

Where then shall I look for the cause? The religion of Christ did prevail; though to persons of figure and influence, its author was an object of contempt; and though his fate was that of the vilest malefactor. It did make its way; though its ministers were the farthest possible from that description of men, who take the lead in society, whose opinions it is the pride of others to adopt, and whose example it is their ambition to follow. It did succeed; though it bore a uniform testimony against all the impiety and immorality practised in the world. Without flattering one disorderly passion of the human heart, without accommodating itself to one corrupt habit, it triumphed over the prejudices of multitudes. Whilst its profession was attended with every temporal discouragement, not only the provinces, but the very city of Rome abounded with Christians! I ask the question once more, if Christianity be a fable, how am I to account for this revolution?

I well know the solution which modern ingenuity has proposed. Gibbon's secondary causes I have repeatedly examined, I would hope, with impartiality; I certainly have done it with attention: but they never gave me satisfaction; and for a reason, which the great Sir Isaac Newton shall assign. He says, that a cause must be known to exist, and that it must be adequate to an effect, before it can be admitted into sound philosophy,

and before such effect can, with propriety, be referred to it. Now the causes, assigned by those who reject the Christian religion, appear to want both these conditions. We have no proof that many of them ever existed; and united, they seem utterly inadequate to explain the various appearances, and account for the phenomena, to which they have been applied. I am therefore a Christian because the early conquests of Christianity will not suffer me to reject it as a fable.

Chap. 3. *Evidence arising from the completion of Prophecy.*

Though conclusive, these, however, are not the only arguments, which give authority to the gospel. The completion of Prophecy furnishes a third reason for that reverence which I feel for Christianity, and for my assent to it as a divine religion.

In perusing the Jewish and Christian writings, I find several predictions. Some of these preceded the Saviour, and others were uttered by him. Some were accomplished in him; and others, in events which took place after his appearing. Examples of each I shall first exhibit; and then show, why they determine me to be a Christian.

It was predicted, that the Messiah should come, 'before the sceptre departed from Judah:' and does not history confirm this prediction? Did not Jesus Christ appear and suffer, before the Jewish government was subverted by the Romans? It was predicted, that 'he should come whilst the second temple was standing;' and that the house should derive glory from the occa-

sional visits of so great a character: and was not this prophecy fulfilled? It was predicted, that he should come 'in four hundred and ninety years' from the time in which the city of the Jews should recover from the disgrace under which it had lain during the captivity; that he should 'be cut off;' and that 'Jerusalem and the temple should be afterwards made desolate.' Did not these things happen in the order, and at the period here described? It was predicted, that in the age of the Messiah, many astonishing works should be performed: and were not such works performed by Jesus Christ? At least, is it not an article in his history, that through his benevolent interposition, and in consequence of his supernatural powers, the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the deaf heard, the dumb spake, the sick recovered, and the dead revived? Finally, it was predicted, that 'he should enter the holy city in triumph; that his enemies should there conspire against him; that 'he should be sold for thirty pieces of silver;' that 'he should be scourged,' and treated with every species of contempt; that his persecutors should 'spit upon him;' that they should 'pierce his hands and feet;' that the spectators of his crucifixion should mock him; that 'the soldiers should draw lots for his garment;' that he should be 'numbered with transgressors;' that 'gall and vinegar' should be presented to him, when in his last agonies; and that he should 'make his grave with the rich:' and in the history of Christ, have we not the completion of these prophecies? — Comparing the predictions and the events, can we deny, that the latter are a perfect counterpart to the former?

The person whose fate was thus particularly foretold, was himself also a prophet. On various occasions he declared to his followers, that he should suffer a violent death. He predicted that his own countrymen would condemn him, and the Gentiles execute the sentence. He foretold the cowardice of Peter, the treachery of Judas, the terror and flight of all his disciples when he should be arrested, his resurrection from the grave, the effusion of the holy spirit, the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, with all the horrors attending it, the dispersion of the Jews, the persecutions of his followers, and the success of the gospel, notwithstanding the opposition which would be made by its enemies: and, according to the records of that age, did not all these things come to pass? Have we not the highest evidence which history can afford, that Jesus Christ both suffered and triumphed in the manner which he had before described? Were not his disciples hated of all men? Were not the most wanton cruelties exercised upon them? Did not the time come, when their extermination from the earth was contemplated as a sacrifice which the honor of God, the interests of truth, and the good of society required? Was not Jerusalem destroyed by the Romans? As to the temple, did the resentment of the conquering army leave one stone of that magnificent building on another? Before their reduction, were not the sufferings of the Jews such as no other people had ever experienced? After that event, were they not dispersed amongst all nations? Does not their dispersion still continue; and are they not, at this very moment, a standing proof of his veracity, who predicted their ruin? When I compare the

denunciations of Jesus Christ with the fate of the Jews, I am unable to account for their conformity, if I reject his divine inspiration. The history of Josephus, who beheld the ruin of his country, comes in aid of the Evangelists; and I feel the same confidence that Christ foretold, as that the historian related, this terrible event.

After a cool and impartial examination of these facts, can it be strange that I should profess myself a Christian? How can I resist the evidence arising from the completion of prophecy? I find many predictions incontestably verified by succeeding events. Will it satisfy my reason, to insinuate that this may be the work of chance? Will it be sufficient to say, that the author of our religion happened to guess right? To those who have any acquaintance with the doctrine of chances, this insinuation will appear both impertinent and absurd. That there could not have been such a series of fortunate guesses, is a point capable of arithmetical demonstration.

The man who can persuade himself to admit this supposition, must, with a very ill grace, object to the miracles, wonders, and signs, ascribed to Jesus Christ. He, of all persons, ought to be the last to charge others with credulity. As to myself, I cannot believe that some hundreds of years before the Saviour appeared, the peculiar circumstances of his life and death were guessed by some imposing diviner. I cannot be reconciled to the supposition, that one, by mere accident, guessed that he would enter Jerusalem riding on an ass, and be there sold for thirty pieces of silver; another, that his enemies would pierce his hands and his feet, would mock his agonies, and cast lots for his garment; a third, that

he would be numbered with transgressors, and be laid in the tomb of a rich man. Such a wonderful resemblance of mere conjecture and fact would exceed any prodigy recorded in the sacred volume.

The same observation will apply to the predictions of Jesus Christ; whether they relate to his own sufferings, or those of his devoted country. It is impossible that Jesus Christ should have described his own sufferings or those of his devoted country with so much precision, unless his mind had been divinely illuminated. The success of modern conjectures is well known: and if Jesus Christ be degraded to the rank of those, who have been most expert at guessing, I must say, their talents will admit of no comparison with his. The art, if it was only an art, makes no figure at the present age. I must therefore conclude, that real predictions were uttered and accomplished; and I must draw from them the inference, that the system is divine, in support of which they have been urged. I have no other alternative, than either to admit this conclusion, or the most extravagant suppositions that ever disgraced the human mind.

Chap. 4. *Evidence arising from the Character and Miracles of Christ.*

I HAVE a fourth reason for my belief and principles as a Christian: and that is, that the author of my religion displayed an example, and performed works, which proclaim not merely a superior, but a divine character. Human language cannot do justice to the temper and morals of Jesus Christ. The excellency of the one, and the purity of the other, render him an object wor-

thy of our highest admiration. In how wonderful a manner did he exemplify his own moral lessons? How divinely did he support his character, as the friend of mankind? With what exquisite tenderness did he conduct towards the miserable? What patience did he display, under every species of provocation? How condescending was he to the weak, how humble, how just, how ready to forgive his enemies, how benevolent to all? What a sublime devotion possessed his heart? In scenes of the deepest distress, how perfect was his resignation? How amiably did he converse? How unblameably did he live? How nobly did he die? Can I reconcile the appearance of such virtue with the mean and interested views of an ambitious impostor? Is it credible, that such pure streams should proceed from a corrupt fountain?

Many who reject the claims, and deny the miracles of Jesus Christ, admit the moral excellency of his character. A greater inconsistency cannot be conceived. What! is it no offence against the laws of morality to appeal to works never performed, and to pretend to the exercise of powers, which never existed? Are deliberate falsehood, imposition, and hypocrisy, to be erased from the catalogue of crimes? Is impiety no stain? To die with an obstinate and inflexible adherence to false pretensions, is there nothing immoral in such behavior? I confess, I have very different views of right and wrong; and I feel a strong conviction, that falsehood and deceit, for whatever purpose they may be employed, and to whatever end they may be directed, are to the last degree criminal and disgraceful.

Yet this accusation must be brought against Jesus Christ, if he did no miracles, and was only a self-commissioned reformer. He certainly did profess to work miracles; and he did appeal to them as divine attestations to his sacred character. If he insisted that he was sent of God to enlighten and save mankind, he was careful to add, 'The works which I do, they bear witness of me.' I must, therefore, deny that he was that excellent person, which some modern unbelievers profess to esteem him; or, I must admit the reality of those miracles, to which he so often, and with so much solemnity, appealed. There is no other alternative. It cannot be, that he was a splendid pattern of pure and sublime morality, whilst his mission and supernatural powers were an artful pretence.

Reduced then to the necessity either of admitting, together with the moral excellencies, the miracles of Jesus, or of rejecting both, I can, without difficulty, make up my judgment. However unphilosophical it may be thought, I am persuaded, that he 'did such works as no man could perform, unless God were with him.' Yes, notwithstanding the metaphysics of some, and the sneers of others, I do believe that he appealed to facts, when he said, 'The blind see; the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed; the deaf hear; and the dead are raised.' God, who ordained the laws of nature, can certainly control or suspend them; nor is there anything absurd in the supposition, that occasions may offer, on which such an application of almighty power may be worthy of God, and reflect honor on his wisdom and benevolence.

It is true, such interruptions of the general course of nature are not visible at the present age. Our eyes have never been gratified with the sight of a miracle: but this is no proof that the eyes of other men, in other ages, have imposed upon their understandings. The king of Siam, because he had never seen ice, denied the possibility of its existence. His narrow experience, under a burning sun, was opposed to the testimony of a credible witness. If this prince had been a metaphysician, with what a multiplicity of arguments would he have encountered and overwhelmed the European, who related the effects of cold upon the waters of his country? If he had been a philosopher, how learnedly would he have reasoned upon the elementary particles of fluids; and from their spherical form, how easily would he have demonstrated the impossibility of congelation? But what is logic when opposed to fact?

The miracles ascribed to Jesus Christ and the Apostles, rest upon the same foundation with other articles which we find in the narratives of his life. They have not come down to us through the channel of tradition, but by means of a formal record, made by persons who declare themselves witnesses of the scenes which they describe. Nor are they introduced into these records merely by way of ornament, or to animate a dull narration; they are an essential part of the work. In the same page we find the miracles and moral lessons of Jesus Christ. In the same artless manner, they are both related: for which reason, I feel myself unable to draw the line, where truth ends, and fiction begins. All my information concerning Jesus Christ, is derived

from the same source. Where testimony is so explicit and circumstantial, I must, therefore, admit the whole, or reject the whole. I mention this, because some have professed to believe the history of our Lord's discourses, whilst they denied that of his miracles: but these articles are so connected, that there can be no discrimination. If an Evangelist deserves credit, when he solemnly declares the things which he heard; why not, when he as solemnly declares the facts which he saw? Why should I ascribe more veracity to his ears, than to his eyes?

That the miracles of Jesus stand as fairly recorded as his moral instructions, is not, however, my only reason for believing them. Certain events, which took place at the memorable period when these miracles are said to have been exhibited, are a demonstration of their reality. I find that multitudes, who had the best means of informing their minds on this subject, and who could have detected the imposition, if any had been practised, were fully persuaded that supernatural powers had been exercised by Christ and his Apostles. So strong was their conviction, that it overcame early habits, and induced them to embrace the religious system which appealed to this evidence. Nor was this all: it overcame the apprehensions of contempt, of worldly losses, of every species of injury, and of a cruel and infamous death. Upon the principle of miracles, it is easy to account for this magnanimity; but, if the Christian record of miracles be a mere fable, how came the conviction of their reality to take possession of so many fair and honest minds, and to produce such astonishing effects? Why did *they* believe, who were placed beyond the reach of imposition, and who could have no motive

to assent to the powers, claimed by the founder and first preacher of the religion, but the certainty that they existed? I am free to confess, that the faith of multitudes, situated as they were, has great influence in confirming my own.

To pursue the argument; I believe the miracles recorded in the New Testament, because they were not called in question by early infidels. The Jews were compelled to own, that the powers, occasionally exercised by Jesus Christ, were supernatural. 'This man doeth many miracles,' was the confession even of the priests and Pharisees; and the modern Jews do not pretend to deny, that the founder of the Christian sect performed many things, which no man could do, unless he were assisted by invisible agents. To avoid, however the consequences of such a concession, they both ascribe his miracles to an infernal cause. Succeeding unbelievers were likewise as well convinced of this part of our Lord's history. Julian acknowledges that Christ opened the eyes of the blind, restored limbs to the lame, and recovered demoniacs from their malady; but he intimates, that these are not very extraordinary feats. Celsus, another violent enemy to Christianity, not presuming to deny the mighty works of Jesus, endeavors to depreciate them, by pretending that he learned magic in Egypt. Besides, it is well known, that because the miracles of Christ could not be denied, attempts were made to eclipse their glory. Apollonius Tyanæus was brought into public view by two unbelievers, as a person whose powers exceeded those of Jesus. The concessions of Julian and Celsus, and this attempt to set up a rival to the Saviour, may be easily accounted

for, if we admit that signs were displayed, and miracles performed by him. But if his supernatural powers were an artful pretence, why did not these adversaries publish the imposition? They did not want sagacity to detect any unfair dealing; and such a discovery would have given the triumph to their cause. That early unbelievers, and some of them persons of the most extensive information, that a Julian and a Celsus did not deny the miracles of Christ, is with me a very strong argument in favor of those miracles. Combined with other evidence, this circumstance is sufficient for my conviction.

Finally, the lying wonders and pretended miracles of impostors, are a proof that supernatural powers have been employed for religious purposes. This appears to be the just conclusion from these facts. Impostors would not have had recourse to such arts, if they had not known the success of real miracles. Would counterfeits have found their way into circulation, if there never had been genuine coin? Did not the latter unquestionably suggest the former? We may be assured, that pretended miracles would never have enriched the legend of a saint, if real miracles had never attracted the attention of mankind. Supernatural powers have been feigned in later times, because, in the primitive ages, such powers really existed. Lying wonders, at the tomb of the Abbé de Paris, came in aid of his doubtful reputation, because the tomb of Christ was the scene of wonders and signs, which gave immortal splendor to his character, and insured the final triumphs of his cause.

I have now assigned the various reasons, on which I

ground my assent to the miracles, which stand recorded in the Christian volume. I believe them, because they rest on the same historic evidence with the moral instructions and common facts, contained in that book. I believe them, because contemporary and subsequent events were such as might have been expected, from the operation of miracles on the human mind. I believe them, because the early opposers of Christianity did not call them in question. I believe them, because their reality appears to me to be a fair deduction from the many unsuccessful attempts to imitate, and to rival them. Thus convinced of the supernatural powers of Jesus Christ and the Apostles, I am persuaded that they spake by authority; and consequently, that the religious system, which derives its name from the former, is not only superior to all others, but that it is divine.

Chap. 5. *Objections Considered.*

With such force do these arguments operate on my understanding, that I feel an increasing confidence in my principles as a Christian. The more I examine the evidences of my religion, the more am I convinced, that it will not be overthrown by the weapons usually employed against it. The foundation which supports it, is not to be weakened by the shafts of wit; nor are its pillars to be shaken by the breath of ridicule. I am sensible that there is no subject which may not be placed in a ludicrous point of light; as there is no character which may not be vilified. Religion, patriotism, chastity, and almost every moral and social virtue, have, in their turn, been so exposed as to invite contempt. Soame Jenyns has discharged all his wit upon the rights of

man, and the leading principles of a free government. If ridicule were the test of truth, his book would be unanswerable. But though it abounds with wit, it contains not one argument; and for this reason the cause of civil freedom has suffered no injury from such an assailant. Though republican principles be the butt of his ridicule, yet they command the highest respect, wherever they are seriously examined. The same observation may be applied to the subject of religion. To overthrow the faith of one, who has studied its evidence, arguments must be employed, and not the false colorings of wit. Facts must be fairly and clearly disproved: otherwise, the Christian will retain his reverence for religion; and though ashamed of the disingenuity of an opposer, he will not be ashamed of the gospel.

From the wit exerted upon Christianity, I now proceed to more sober objections; and I must say, that, however plausible they may seem at first, they do not, by any means, invalidate its evidence. Many of them are impertinent, because they are levelled, not against the Christian religion, but against its corruptions. Many more are sufficiently answered by an appeal to the constitution of nature, and the degree of evidence upon which we act in general concerns. Some objections, if admitted, would overthrow the credit of all history. Others, when pursued to their just consequences, would not only subvert the religion of Christ, but would bury natural religion in its ruins.

In vain then are objections of this kind urged against Christianity. In vain am I reminded, that the gospel was first preached to the multitude, and not to the learned and wise. I know that there is as much fairness of

mind in the former, as in the latter; and in regard to matters of fact, that they are as competent judges. In vain am I called to reflect, that false pretences to inspiration, and lying wonders, have, in all ages, been employed for political purposes: the fact I do not dispute; but I deny the conclusion. Falsehoods are daily uttered, but does it follow, that the truth is never spoken? Because many counterfeits are in circulation, is there no unadulterated coin? As I have before had occasion to observe, the various arts of religious imposition take their origin from real miracles, and a real inspiration. In vain am I told, that the Christian system is not universal; and, by consequence, cannot proceed from the common Parent of mankind. I know that reason is imparted in various degrees; that the means of improvement, civil liberty, and all the outward blessings of life, are bestowed in different measures on different objects; and yet I am persuaded that they all come from God. In vain is my attention called to the angry disputes of Christians, respecting the doctrines of the gospel. I am convinced that such is the weakness of the human mind, disputes may arise on any subject. I hear men dispute on the principles of government, the rights of citizens, and the nature and extent of civil liberty; and yet I doubt not that these rights and this liberty have a real foundation, and that the end of government is their security. Why then should the disputes of Christians discredit the gospel? In vain is my faith insulted with the mortifying insinuation, that professors do not exemplify the virtues of their religion; that their principles and practice are often at variance. I am sensible that Christians are rational agents, and that the in-

fluence of their religion is not compulsory, but moral. Why then should I be more surprised that the laws of the gospel should be occasionally disregarded, than that the dictates of conscience, or the laws written on the heart, should not always maintain their authority? In vain will any urge, to the prejudice of Christianity, the ambition of a priesthood, and the various steps, by which the ministers of religion ascended from the condition of instructers, to that of oppressors. The gospel, I am certain, gives no countenance to such abuses. So far from it, spiritual pride and spiritual tyranny are objects of its execration. I might go on to enumerate other popular objections against the system; but he who has formed his ideas of Christianity from the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists, will be certain that its credit is not injured by them.

As there is not any subject which may not be turned into ridicule, neither is there any historical fact, against which many plausible objections may not be raised. Considering his power, influence, and popularity, the destruction of Cæsar, by the Roman senators, may be opposed with great ingenuity; and many arguments may be brought to fix a suspicion on this part of ancient history. The execution of Charles the First, and the domination of Cromwell, are likewise articles which a logician might assail with many objections. If a skeptic were so disposed, how easily might he refute (as the term is sometimes understood) the history of American Independence? He might contrast the naval and military strength, the riches and the population of Britain, with the poverty and weakness of the colonies; — he might also expatiate on the different principles, habits,

interfering interests, and jealousies of the colonists; — and subjoining the fears of some, and the strong attachment of others to their political parent, he might, from the whole, show the incredibility of our Revolution. Still, the glorious fact is a refutation of such reasonings. I must observe, that in regard to historical relations, the testimony of one credible witness will outweigh millions of such objections, as a fruitful imagination may easily invent.

This conviction never fails to accompany me, when I repair to the sacred oracles. In the New Testament, I find a detail of instructions given, of wonders performed, and of futurities revealed. I am also entertained with a particular account of the sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. Other astonishing events are likewise as circumstantially related. The history containing these things appears to be as fairly written, and to carry with it as substantial proofs of its authenticity, as any history which has gained credit in the world. Do any ask, why I believe the antiquity of the Christian records? I answer, for the same reason that I believe the antiquity of Virgil's Poems, Cæsar's Commentaries, or Sallust's Narrations; and that is, the concurring testimony of all intervening ages. Do any ask, why I believe, that the several books were written by the persons whose names they bear? I answer for the same reason that I believe the Georgics to be the production of Virgil; — Jerusalem Delivered, that of Tasso; — Paradise Lost, that of Milton; — an Essay upon the subject of Miracles, to be the work of Hume; — and a Refutation of that Essay, the performance of Campbell. Do any inquire, whether the sacred

pages have not been greatly corrupted? I answer, they have not been greatly corrupted, as appears by a collation of the earliest manuscripts, and an appeal to the earliest versions and ancient fathers. So many corroborating circumstances plead in favor of the gospel, that I must either distrust all records, or continue to admit the authenticity of those which display the duty and hopes of a Christian.

Conclusion.

THE religion of Jesus Christ does not decline a fair examination. It consents to meet opposition ; but, in the character of its opponent, it requires certain qualifications which have not always appeared in the contest. It requires a large acquaintance with the system itself, an acquaintance formed, not through the medium of human creeds, but by a direct application to the evangelic records. It requires also an extensive knowledge of the peculiar language, in which those records were originally composed, of the various readings grounded on different manuscripts, of Heathen and Jewish testimonies, of the customs and moral state of those countries, where Christianity was first published, of the concessions and objections of the earliest unbelievers, and of the general history of the church. Thus furnished, several have attacked this religion; but the contest has generally terminated in their conviction. I know many instances, where men have opened the history of Christ with the disrespect of unbelievers, and closed it with the reverence of Christians.

The prevailing sentiments of Americans will be naturally on the side of that religion, which has been the

subject of this work. Its influence in the first settlement of the country, will not be soon effaced from their minds. Their republican principles will inspire a reverence for a system, which admits of no respect of persons, but enjoins the same duties on all ; and opens to all, the same prospects of glory, honor, and immortality. Its benevolent tendency, conspiring with its evidence, must ensure to it a fair examination. Those who thus examine, even if they remain unconvinced, will consent that others should cultivate its temper, and follow its rules. They will not be displeased at seeing the virtue of their neighbors directed and invigorated by Christian principles. Even though they may not see fit to adopt their language, yet they will impute no uncommon weakness, credulity, or fanaticism to those, who say with the Apostle, ' Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.'

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OF

REDEMPTION BY CHRIST JESUS.

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REDEMPTION BY CHRIST JESUS.

I. PARDONING mercy, spiritual aid, final acceptance, and eternal life, are blessings too inestimable for any one, who has a sense of his needs, to hesitate in humbly and earnestly closing in with the terms on which they are proposed to him: but — both for his own sake, and for the sake of God's truth, and the effects of it upon those who are hereafter to receive it — he must not learn those terms from the teachings of men, but solely from the declarations of revelation. The Scriptures are our only record of those declarations; and in the Scriptures alone must we search for them, if we desire to rest on the only foundation (1 Cor. iii. 11.) No doctrine which is not *expressly* taught there, can be admitted as a doctrine of revelation. The theories of divines, to explain the 'simplicity that is in Christ' (2 Cor. xi. 3,) must be carefully distinguished from the revealed will of God; and however true and important their inferences may be, these are not the doctrines of the Gospel, To know these doctrines we must 'cast down imaginations' (2 Cor. x. 5,) and sit meekly at the feet of Christ, and of those whose minds he illuminated with his truth. His word, which is the word of God, is truth. (John xii. 49, xvii. 17.)

II. All the blessings of the Gospel, and all the means through which they were effectually communicated and

diffused, originated in the free grace, the love, nay the 'tender mercy' of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. *His* mercy prompted, *his* wisdom devised, and *his* power effected, the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. In short, Christ and his salvation were the *effect*, and not the *cause*, of the Father's love and mercy towards mankind. — Luke i. 78, 79. 1 John iv. 9 — 19. Luke xv. 18 — 32.

III. Christ Jesus was the appointed 'mediator between God and man' (1 Tim. ii. 5.) — the minister and messenger of God's gracious purposes to mankind: and in order to execute them, (influenced by the most consummate piety and obedience to God, and by the purest love to men,) he voluntarily submitted to the painful and ignominious death of the cross, and thereby became the 'author of an eternal salvation to all who obey him.'

IV. The blessings of the Gospel are (in brief) as follows: —

1. A clear knowledge of the character, dealings, and purposes of God, considered not only as the sovereign ruler and righteous judge of his creatures, but also as their father, their friend, and their benefactor.

2. The certain disclosure, by his express authority, of a resurrection from the dead, and a life to come; a state of righteous retribution — of dreadful wo to the impenitent and disobedient, of holy bliss to the penitent, sincere, and faithful; and this according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil.

3. The assurance, on the express authority of God himself, of his mercy to the truly penitent who forsake their evil ways and turn unto the Lord with full purpose of heart, — the assurance of the remission of sins on repentance.

4. Plain and profitable directions in the way of duty, showing with certainty (by instructions and by example) what is the will of God; what worship and what service, what dispositions and what external conduct, will be acceptable to him; and what are offensive in his sight.

5. The promise to those who faithfully seek his favor, of all needful aid and support in the trials and duties of life; and the confident assurance that all things shall work together for their good.

6. The most affecting manifestations of the grace of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, fitted to turn the sinner from the error of his ways, and to bind the Gospel to the believer's heart, and constrain him to devote himself to the service of him who loved us and gave himself for us.

V. All these inestimable blessings, (with an especial reference to pardoning mercy and final acceptance,) constitute together the *Redemption that is in Christ Jesus*, — the means of deliverance from the power and punishment of sin, and the fear of death. And all these we have 'through his blood,' through his death. (Eph. i. 7.) We can possess them (as we now do) on divine promise, only by faith in him; and if this faith becomes a vital principle of the heart, regulating the life, it is a faith unto salvation.

VI. Since we should not have possessed the blessed and sanctifying promises and guidance of the Gospel, but by the death of Christ — since his death, though on his own part perfectly voluntary, was (by the appointment of infinite wisdom) necessary to convey, to assure, and to diffuse them to mankind, — we owe the possession of gospel privileges to his death; and whatever influence they have upon us, in delivering us from

the bondage of sin and death, and making us fit objects of God's pardoning mercy and final acceptance, may be most justly ascribed to his death, and they are so in various parts of the New Testament. His blood ratified the new covenant, and was shed for the remission of sins; and he gave up his life as a ransom, (or means of spiritual deliverance,) to deliver men from the bondage of sin and death.

VII. From the light of nature alone — in other words, from what we learn of God's moral government without revelation — it would not have been possible to attain, on a solid basis, the assured conviction that God will, upon repentance, so far pardon sins, as to remove the consequences of them in a future state of being. In many cases he does not do it in this life; and what but his own declaration could have enabled us to say, with secure confidence, that he will in another? But what unenlightened reason could not assure us, revelation does. By the christian's charter, forgiveness is made to depend upon repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ: and Jehovah himself declared, that if the wicked man forsake his way, and turn unto the Lord, he will abundantly pardon him. (Luke xxiv. 47; Acts v. 31. xx. 21; xxvi. 17 — 20. Is. lv; 6 — 9.) Such declarations can mean nothing less than hath God will relieve the truly penitent from the evils attending continued sin and impenitence; restore them to his forfeited favor; and (in connexion with the promise of a future life) make them partakers of eternal blessedness. Repentance has that efficacy which God, in his mercy, hath given it; and he hath made it the condition of pardon: he hath set forth Christ Jesus as a mercy-seat (Rom. iii. 25,) to be approached by faith — at which he proclaims the purposes of his grace, and

which was sprinkled with the blood of this self-devoting victim.

VIII. The real purposes of the death of Christ, as gathered from the Scriptures, are as follows:

1. It was necessary in order to fulfil the prophecies respecting the Messiah, which represent him as, by the appointment of Jehovah, suffering and dying on account of the sins of men, preparatory to his reception of a kingdom embracing all mankind. — Luke xxiv. 26, 46. Is. liii. 4 — 6. Dan. vii. 13, 14.

2. It ratified the new covenant, by which the blessings of pardoning mercy, of divine aid and guidance, and of everlasting life, are promised to the penitent, sincere, and faithful. This representation of the purposes of the death of Christ is of essential importance, because made by our Lord himself; and if divines had deemed it sufficient, and kept close to it, much bewildering and baneful error would have been avoided. It is founded on the ancient mode of ratifying covenants; and, in particular, on the solemnities by which Moses ratified the covenant of which he was appointed the mediator. (Exod. xxiv. 6 — 8.) Had the Gospel been first communicated in our days, and in this part of the world, it might have been spoken of as the *Charter* of pardon, of grace, and of eternal life; and then it might have been well said to have been *signed* with the blood of the ambassador of mercy. — See Matt. xxvi. 28. Heb. xiii. 20. 1 Pet. i. 2.

3. The public and violent death of Christ, was of essential importance to the security of faith in his resurrection, and consequently to all its blessed effects in the confirmation and spread of his gospel, and in the assurance of its sanctifying hope. With a view to this,

our Saviour voluntarily laid down his life; and all its effects we owe, under God, to this sacrifice of himself. — 1 Pet. i. 3; John x. 17, 18. xii. 32.

4. The sufferings and death of Christ were requisite to perfect the excellencies of our Lord's character (Heb. ii. 10.) as well as for the manifestation of them to others, and the influence of them upon the heart. No means could have been more adapted to influence the best affections of our nature, our admiring gratitude and reverential love; or to prepare the soul for the reception of the heavenly doctrines of our Saviour. — 2 Cor. v 14, 15.

5. The sufferings and death of Christ were necessary, by the appointment of God, for his exaltation, for his own personal reward, and for the diffusion of the blessings of his kingdom. (Phil. ii. 9 — 11. Heb. xii. 2.) He not only thereby became the Redeemer of all who believe in him, from the bondage and punishment of sin, but attained the power of raising the dead, to life or condemnation.

6. The gospel dispensation was designed to put an end to the exclusive privileges of the people of Israel, to terminate the ritual services of the law, and to communicate its own privileges and blessings without distinction of Jew or Gentile. This incalculably important change was brought about through the *death* of the Messiah — (itself the act by which his own people sealed their rejection of him, their ruin, and the destruction of their temple); and both are often spoken of by the Apostle of the Gentiles with rapture and amazement. — Eph. ii. iii. &c.

7. Finally, every view of the subject brings to this conclusion, that God, in his wisdom and in his mercy, so ordered events, that, to convey, to assure, and to

diffuse the blessings of the Gospel, and to make them duly efficacious for their gracious purposes, it was *necessary* for Christ Jesus to submit to the painful and ignominious death of the cross: that he did *voluntarily* submit to it, in order to accomplish those purposes, and that, therefore, (under the appointment of infinite wisdom,) we owe all the unspeakable privileges and blessings of the Gospel, to this great act of devotedness and love. It is the simple fact, that, 'in him we have redemption through his blood,' and that 'he gave his life a ransom for us.'

VIII. This simple fact, taken in connexion with the circumstances in which the Gospel was preached, explains the language of the New Testament without resorting to theories which revelation does not teach, and some of which it expressly opposes. It is nowhere declared that the death of Christ satisfied the law, or the justice, of God; that it enabled God to forgive; that God could not forgive sins without a satisfaction, by the vicarious punishment of an innocent person. It is nowhere declared that the sufferings of Christ were a punishment at all, as it respects the Father who appointed them. It is nowhere declared that the death of Christ appeased the wrath of God, rendered him propitious, made him merciful, or disposed him to forgive. Every form of the satisfaction scheme, or high doctrine of atonement, is either directly opposed, or at least quite unsupported, by the declarations of revelation.

IX. Whoever are led by the Gospel and death of Christ to a sincere repentance and sanctifying faith, are thereby made proper objects of God's mercy and acceptance. Such may strictly be said to have forgive-

ness through his blood; and they are figuratively said to be 'washed from their sins in his blood,' and to have made their garments 'white in the blood of the Lamb.' — Since, through his work and sufferings, his true disciples are led to forsake sin, and to yield themselves up to 'righteousness and true holiness,' and thus to obtain the favor of God, Christ is said to be the *propitiation* for their sins, the minister of God's pardoning mercy. — That God forgives sins *through him*, and that men are, *through him*, brought into a state of acceptance with God, are perfectly scriptural representations. But that, by some direct, immediate efficacy, the death of Christ procures the sinner's pardon; that it is the consideration on account of which God pardons the sincere penitent; that it gave repentance its efficacy, so as to be accepted by God; that, in short, God forgives sins *for the sake* of what Christ did and suffered; — these are not scriptural representations; and they cannot be admitted, except on the express teachings of revelation, because the truth of them could only be known thereby. The only place, even in the common translation, where God is represented as pardoning sins for Christ's sake, is Eph. iv. 32; but there the connexion shows that God's pardon is given from his own mercy; and the original is truly rendered by Archbishop Newcome, Dr Boothroyd, and many others, 'And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, *through* Christ, hath forgiven you.' The merits of Christ Jesus, or the atoning merits of his blood, are not represented in Scripture as the consideration on which pardon is granted. No Jew, accustomed to think of the Lord God as 'merciful and gracious,' and to pray to him 'O Lord, forgive for thine own sake — for thy great mercies,' could look for any other ground of forgiveness; nor should the Christain

teach any other, unless this be expressly taught by Christ or his Apostles. And where is it taught by them?

X. That we have our hopes of pardon and everlasting life *through* the death of Christ — and, that God gives pardon and everlasting life *in consideration of* the death of Christ — are two very different things; the former is the fact; the latter, the inference of the theologian. It is the lowest form of what is termed the doctrine of atonement. In the New Testament this word is only once used, viz. Rom. v. 11; and there it might have been rendered *reconciliation*, as in 2 Cor. v. 19: but our translators used it in the sense of *at-one-ment*, which has the same general import. The gospel of Christ is the atonement or reconciliation, because it turns men from sin unto God, so that they may receive forgiveness and final acceptance. It would be well if the term atonement were relinquished by divines for reconciliation or redemption, which better suit the source, the nature, and the means of gospel salvation.

XI. The self-devoting sacrifice of Christ is beautifully spoken of by St Paul as a *burnt offering* (Eph. v. 2. comp. Phil. iv. 18); and he speaks of Christ as our *passover*, the means of deliverance from spiritual destruction: but the Apostle no where compares his death to the *sin-offerings* of the law.

XII. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, (which Luther, Beausobre, Le Clerc, and others ascribe to Apollos, which Calvin and Grotius did not regard as St Paul's, and which has been demonstrated not to be his in the Boston Christian Examiner for 1829,) the author represents the self-sacrifice of Christ as corresponding with the *sin-offerings* of the law. Neither our Lord himself, nor his Apostles, in their preachings, as far as

the book of Acts informs us, nor the Apostle of the Gentiles in his Epistles, taught this; nor do we gain new light from the correspondence. To what extent did they correspond? — The original Hebrew word translated *atonement*, signifies a *covering:* the offering was appointed by God to cover, hide, or efface, *ritual* desecrations; and after the sacrifice, the offerer was permitted to share in the privileges of the sanctuary. The consecration thus renewed was effected without any reference to the worshipper's dispositions; though doubtless intended to *promote* holiness of heart. There were no such sacrifices for presumptuous or heinous transgressions; and in those cases when they were appointed after immorality, this was punished, and then the offender offered his covering (or effacing) sacrifice. The sin-offerings of the law, have been misinterpreted through impressions from heathen sacrifices; and the self-sacrifice of Christ, has been interpreted accordingly. — This was appointed by divine wisdom and love to bring about the spiritual sanctification of his followers; but its efficacy is *through the word* — through the aids, privileges, and promises of his Gospel. (Eph v. 26.) Its everlasting and universal purposes, are infinitely superior to the immediate purpose of the ritual atonements; and its sanctifying influence is alike superior in its mode of operation. The Gospel knows no holiness but the holiness of the heart: and if, by the mercy and the grace of God through Christ Jesus, we attain this, and in proportion as we attain it, Christ is our Saviour, and the ends of his death are answered in us: in proportion as we comprehend the purposes, the extent, and the nature of his salvation, shall we discern reason to cherish a lively, grateful, obedient, and faithful love to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to glory in his cross; and to yield the tribute of supreme gratitude love, and obedience to his God and Father.

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ON

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CHANGE OF HEART.

In the beginning of the third chapter of John's Gospel, it is declared 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Now in order to understand these words aright, it is necessary to consider the circumstances in which they were uttered. Nicodemus a ruler of the Jews, came to our Lord, full of Jewish notions and expectations respecting the Messiah. He had heard of or witnessed some of the miracles of Jesus, and had been unable wholly to resist the conviction that no man could perform such unless God were with him. On the other hand, the manner of our Lord's coming and his whole external condition were entirely at variance with his preconceived ideas of the Messiah. In this state of perplexity, desirous of learning something more of Jesus's pretensions and yet fearful of committing himself by openly visiting him, he went to him by night.

Compare, now, the views of Nicodemus and of his countrymen generally with the true nature and purposes of the gospel. They were expecting a temporal Messiah; — an earthly kingdom. They were looking for

national aggrandisement, for deliverance from political bondage, for triumph over the enemies of their nation; for the establishment of a universal empire, of which the Holy Land should be the centre, their Messiah sovereign, and the Jewish people a nation of princes and rulers. Then was their pride to be gratified by a grandeur beyond that of the most glorious passages of their past history; and complete revenge taken on the hated enemies, under whose insults and oppressions they were writhing. Every evil, worldly and selfish passion was cherished by their hope of the coming Messiah.

And now what was there in the religion of Jesus to satisfy these hopes? In what respects did the real purposes of the gospel coincide with these anticipations? What was there in common between the expected Messiah and him who actually appeared in that character? Nothing. Although in Jesus the sure word of prophecy, on which they founded their hopes, was completely fulfilled, yet in no respect did he answer the expectations they had raised upon it. He came indeed to establish a kingdom, but it was a spiritual kingdom — a kingdom in the hearts of his followers — a kingdom of purity, holiness and righteousness. He came to save them from bondage and from enemies — a worse than political bondage — a more oppressive enemy than the proud Roman; — from the bondage of sin, from the tyranny of corrupt passions and appetites. He came to lead them to glory; — not at the head of a conquering army, through seas of blood, — not to a glory displayed in worldly pomp, in wealth, splendor, wide empire and subjugated nations; — but to a true and

substantial glory, — by revealing to them their immortal destiny, their unlimited powers, their capacity of indefinite attainments in spiritual excellence, by clothing them with power over the chances, changes and temptations of the present world, and opening to them another beyond the present, of inconceivable glory and happiness. Here were a power, a kingdom, and a glory for which a thoroughly worldly and sensual heart could have no relish, and of which it could form no conception. They were to exist in circumstances which to such a heart must appear wholly incompatible with them. They were to be established in poverty and suffering, contempt and persecution. The founder was an humble peasant, his followers illiterate fishermen. His uncompromising condition to all who would become his disciples was, that they should renounce all their worldly possessions, quit every object of affection, and take up their cross and follow him. Not only had he no earthly power to effect the purpose of his mission, but he was hated and strongly opposed by the rulers and priests of his nation, who finally procured his ignominious death.

These reflections will serve to explain the meaning of the passage. 'To be born again,' was a phrase familiar to every Jewish ear. It signified the adoption of a heathen proselyte into the Jewish church. The outward form of baptism and circumcision was called 'the new birth.' This was its original and primary meaning. But as a change of religion from Heathenism to the knowledge of the true God and the comparatively spiritual worship of Judaism, implied an internal change of views, disposition and character, this change came

secondarily to be denoted by the phrase 'new birth.' When therefore our Lord made to Nicodemus the declaration above quoted, the first idea which it conveyed to his mind was, that the Messiah had come to establish a new religion; that he had not come, as was expected, to continue the former dispensation, to re-establish the ancient worship and restore it to its original splendor; but to close the old dispensation and commence a new one; to abolish the service of the temple, the sacrifices, the priesthood and the whole ritual law, and to establish another, a more pure and spiritual religion. To a Jew, who fondly believed in the perpetuity of the dispensation under which he lived, this was indeed a startling annunciation. And it further implied to Nicodemus, and to all his countrymen who indulged similar worldly hopes, the necessity of a thorough change of heart, that is, a change of the objects on which his desires and affections were fixed, a change in his motives and his purposes of action, a change in his tastes, dispositions and views of happiness. Instead of the expected enjoyments of ease, wealth and distinction in the Messiah's kingdom, he would be called on to mortify his selfish desires and inclinations, to renounce the world, its pleasures, profits and distinctions, to give up his earthly all, to submit to labor and danger, want and ignominy, and to find his recompense in the happiness of purity of heart and life, of disinterested benevolence, of a devout and pious spirit, and of the hope of a pure and spiritual heaven. A greater change can scarcely be imagined than that which must be experienced by a man who had indulged the prevalent hopes respecting the Messiah, and afterwards embraced the gospel of Christ.

It becomes an interesting question, What instruction are we of the present day to gather from this passage? Does it apply in the same sense and with equal force to us who were born and educated in a christian land, as to Jews and heathens in the time of Jesus? Can as great a change be necessary to any of us as was required of them? I answer that the declaration of Jesus applies and will forever apply to all who are of the same worldly character with Nicodemus. It teaches the necessity of spiritual mindedness as the essential element of the christian character. It teaches the necessity of a deep and abiding sense of the reality of spiritual things; such a sense of them as shall give them a strong hold on the affections; as shall make them appear to the soul the most important and substantial things in the universe; as shall make them powerful motives of action. A sense of God, — the habitual perception of him in all things, in his works, in his providence, in his word and in our hearts, — love and reverence toward him, trust in him, submission to him, a constant reference in all our thoughts, words and deeds to his will as to that of a being most near and necessary to us, — a sense of the immortal powers and boundless capacities of our souls, of the true happiness of exercising those capacities and powers in attainments in holiness, of those deep wants and strong cravings of the immortal spirit which nothing but a complete devotion of itself to God, ever can fill and satisfy, — a vital faith in that unseen world beyond the present, where the soul will be admitted to nearer communion with the source of all felicity, where its faculties shall be freed from the encumbrances of this mortal tenement, shall

be fully developed, and in their exercise shall afford a pure and unalloyed enjoyment,— these are characteristics of the religious state. Unless the soul is by some means or other brought to a sense of these things and made to act in reference to them, it cannot be religious. In proportion as the perception of these things is vivid and powerful, is the soul religious.

We may imagine two perfectly distinct and opposite classes of character. We may suppose a man to have occupied himself about sensible objects until his whole soul has become engrossed in them, and is contracted to the narrow sphere in which it has been engaged. He is satisfied with the happiness which these things afford. He has no hopes or desires beyond them. The attainment of this world's goods he regards as a final good; the loss of them as a final evil. When he hears of spiritual pleasures, hopes, and consolations, the words fall upon his ear without conveying an idea to his mind. When he witnesses worldly sacrifices for the sake of duty, he regards them either as the effects of an insane enthusiasm or a trick of hypocrisy. If his thoughts ever pass the bounds of the present life, he finds nothing beyond them on which his hopes and affections can fix; to him it is a region of darkness and mystery. Death he anticipates with dismay as the termination of all the schemes he has ever formed, the extinction of all the enjoyment he has ever tasted, and as the period of his entrance in an unknown world, of which he can form no conception, in which he can imagine no congenial occupation, no desirable pleasures. This is the state of what is called in Scripture the '*natural* man;' not because it is the natural state of every man until

he is acted upon by a supernatural influence; — on the contrary it is a most unnatural condition; it is the result of a gross voluntary neglect of the highest and noblest faculties which God has made a part of our nature, and which he intended should bear sway among all our other faculties. The original word would be more properly translated 'the *animal* man,' — the man whose animal propensities and powers only have been developed, and whose spiritual capacities have all been left unexercised and uncultivated. This is a state of sin and misery. The man who is in it must pass through the present life a stranger to the highest and purest happiness he is capable of even here, and at its close he must be utterly stripped of everything which he has ever esteemed a good.

On the other hand, we may imagine the man who sees much, infinitely much beyond the things of sense. These spiritual things which have already been spoken of — God — the future world — the soul — its immortal and unlimited capacities — the unspeakable happiness of holiness, — are to him the most important and substantial objects in the universe. He has not merely a feeble and glimmering perception of them; they are not to his view dim, shadowy fleeting objects; they are fixed, prominent, vivid realities; they take hold on his affections; they inspire his hopes; they kindle all the energies of his soul; they are the commanding motives of his actions; they influence his whole life and give a tone to his whole character. Everything else is regarded in its subservience to these, and is viewed in the light which these shed upon it. The gains and the losses of this life are not esteemed good or evil in them-

selves, but everything is esteemed a good which may be improved as a means of advancement in religion, and the richest of earth's treasures would be considered a miserable recompense for the smallest sin. And death he regards, not as the extinction of hope and the end of happiness, but as the entrance upon a state in which the soul is brought nearer to all that it has most desired, and will be enabled to pursue with higher powers and to greater advantage the objects on which its affections have been most firmly fixed.

I do not say that these two characters ever exist pure and unmixed. Probably no man is either so good or so bad as he might be. If all mankind are in fact divided into two perfectly distinct classes, saints and sinners, it is a distinction which exists only to that eye which seeth the secrets of all hearts, and not one which it becomes fallible man to make among his fellows. But it certainly is true that the characters of men are distinguished by their prevailing tendencies towards one or the other of these extremes. There are men whose thoughts and whose hearts are mainly occupied above the things of sense, and over whom the spiritual objects of religion exercise but a feeble and fitful influence. There are others who in all their thoughts and actions have an habitual reference to those spiritual objects. If there exists a man of so thoroughly worldly and sensual a character as the first I have described, as great and radical a change is necessary in order to his becoming a religious man as is consistent with his personal identity. And in precisely the degree in which a man approaches that character, is there a necessity of the greater change.

I come now to the inquiry, What is the nature of this change? Is it a change in our moral constitution? Is it a change in the very nature of our affections, or is it only a transfer of them from one set of objects to another? In answer to these questions, I shall endeavor to illustrate the proposition that the affections which religion calls forth and exercises, are the same which we are every day bestowing on some object or other. Consider, for example, that first great principle of all religion, the reverence and love of God. There is no necessity of supposing a new faculty in order to enable us to exercise these faculties. They are precisely the same as reverence and love for greatness and goodness wherever they are found. They are the same indeed in nature, although on account of the infinity and perfection of their object, they ought to be far greater in degree. How natural is our reverence for moral purity. How strong our confidence in known and tried rectitude of character. How do we love kindness, benevolence and mercy whenever and wherever we see them or hear of them; — though in a distant region; — though at a remote period:— though none of their influences can ever reach us. Is not this the spontaneous sentiment of every unperverted heart; — nay, and of many sadly perverted ones? For do not men often retain their deliberate approbation and reverence of exalted goodness long after they have lost their desire to imitate it? I say are not these natural sentiments in the human breast? In order to call them forth, is any thing more necessary than distinctly to present to them their appropriate objects?

Why then may not these affections be directed to

God? Why, when we already possess these capacities, suppose that new ones are necessary before we can give our hearts unto Him, who is essential purity, holiness and love? Do these excellences excite a more lively emotion when they are exercised with great power, guided by extraordinary wisdom, and operate in an extensive sphere? How natural an object of lively affection, then, is the God of almighty power and infinite wisdom, of universal presence, and eternal being. Are the affections which these attributes call forth rendered more vivid by the circumstance that we ourselves are the immediate and constant objects of them? that all their blessed influences are operating unceasingly on our interest and happiness? How then can we doubt our capacity of loving Him in whom we live and move and have our being, our continual benefactor, our kind father, our gracious friend?

But it may be said, We can behold the earthly objects of our affection. We can understand their agency in promoting our happiness. We can see their hand stretched out to aid and bless us, and their countenance of love beaming upon us. But God is a spiritual and unseen being. He operates by second causes. In the complaining language of Job, 'Behold I go forward but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him.' I know this is a great difficulty; but it is not one which makes it impossible to fix our affections on God, still less is it a circumstance which alters the nature of the affection bestowed upon Him.

This point has been well illustrated by the supposed

case of a child who had never seen his earthly parent, but who had received many favors from him, and had been taught to act in obedience to his known wishes. Suppose a child in such circumstances. Suppose the parent to be in a distant country ; — that the child has been informed of the excellence of his character, and assured of his love. Suppose he is continually receiving as testimonies of that love, gifts for the supply of his wants and the gratification of his innocent wishes. Suppose that the parent communicates to him the line of conduct he wishes him to pursue in return for all kindness, and invites him to express to him his wants and to seek his counsel and direction. I ask, could not a child love that unseen parent? Would not the intercourse he has with him be sufficient to give him a distinct consciousness that he has indeed a kind father, to make him rejoice in the knowledge that he possessed that father's love, and to induce him to regulate his conduct by the known will of his parent? There can be no doubt of it.

And just so capable is every man of loving God. Though, like the supposed parent, he is unseen, he is not like him afar off. We have assurance of the moral perfection of his character, and of his ever watchful providence over us. Our very existence, its continual preservation, the innumerable blessings which gladden it, are unceasing testimonies of his love. He has revealed to us in our consciences and in his word what he would have us to do. He invites us to come to him in prayer, to lay before him our wants, and to seek from him guidance and strength to do his will. Are not these circumstances sufficient, as in the sup-

posed case, to give us a distinct idea of God; to give us an idea of him as a being with whom we are intimately and necessarily connected; to kindle our affections toward him; to lead us to act in conformity to his will? Yes. The love of God is just as natural in the human heart as the love of an earthly parent; that is, it is just as much an exercise of an original faculty of our nature. It is true when a man who has been long unaccustomed to think of God, first turns his attention toward him, he finds his idea of him vague, and he is unable to fix at once any warm affection upon him; and neither could a child, when first told of a parent whom he had never heard of before, at once pour out to him the full measure of filial love. That sentiment in all its richness is the result of a long series of love and kindness on one part, and of the habit, on the other, of referring that kindness to its true source. And so, too, is the habitual sense of connexion with God, the growing fruit of cultivation and habit; it is confirmed by the custom of looking to God as the author of all good, and of seeking from his exhaustless fulness supplies for the wants of the soul. This spirit may be so cherished as to give to the soul as deep and vivid, as abiding and practical a sense of his Almighty and Eternal Friend, as it ever has of a mortal and visible one. It has often attained this strength. Thousands of Christians in every age of the church have been sustained by it through scenes of severe trial and deep affliction, and by its influences have preserved amidst the adverse circumstances of this life an inward serenity and joy which were a foretaste of the the peace and happiness of heaven.

Who shall presume to say that this was a miraculous

state of soul; a state unattainable except by a supernatural aid, which must be inactively waited for, and may never be granted? This idea is a discouraging and dangerous delusion. Every individual has within his bosom at least the germ of those affections and capacities which formed the character of the most eminent saint that ever lived. He can develope, cultivate and confirm those faculties and affections, by the exercise of his natural powers, by the use of the ordinary means of grace, and with the help of those holy influences from the spirit of God which are never withheld from sincere prayer and earnest endeavor. If a man is conscious to himself that these affections and capacities are yet dormant in his soul; that the work of bringing them out is yet to be begun, that he is still wholly engrossed by the things of time and sense, let him not apply to his conscience the flattering palliative that it is the necessary result of an originally corrupt nature. It is the result of his own voluntary and sinful neglect and perversion of the noble nature, God has given him.

I remark further, that a man may be led to undertake the work of forming the religious character by a sense of those wants of which every one may at any time become conscious by descending into the depths of his own soul. What is the universal desire of all mankind? It is a burning desire after happiness; and different men place their happiness in different things. Some men place it in the accumulation of this world's goods, and they rise early and sit up late, to labor for riches. Another man places it in power and fame, and he toils hard to ascend the difficult steep of station and eminence Another places it in freedom from care and in agreeable

sensation, and he consumes his life in indolence and corporeal pleasure. Another places it in the mere acquisition of knowledge, and exhausts his spirit by the pursuit of learning. And these men often imagine themselves satisfied. But they are not satisfied. A thousand voices around and within them are continually crying to them that they are not satisfied. But they stop their ears to the unwelcome truth. There is the dread of chance and accident which may at any moment cut off the sources of their fancied happiness. There is the fearful looking forward to the certainty of their termination at death. There is the experience that while they remain the same, the capacity of enjoying them may be destroyed by disease and pain. There is the experience that they may be all turned to bitterness by the reproaches of a troubled conscience. And when every circumstances within and without has combined to give them their greatest effect, then comes the painful conviction how inadequate is their very perfection to fill the desires of the soul. Then, when the soul has gone on in its chosen path, until it has come to the end, and yet has not reached the goal of its wishes, it can no longer escape the perception of its error and folly. Is the truth of this last mentioned experience doubted? It is uncommon only because complete and uninterrupted success is rare. But I appeal for its probability to the unbiassed testimony of every heart. Let a man retire into the secret chamber of his soul. Let him solemnly question himself about the reality and amount of the happiness he is receiving from this world's goods. Let him ask himself, whether he is indeed *satisfied* with them? Let him put to himself the searching inquiry whether he would be

willing to continue in the very same round of pursuits and pleasures he is now running, through an unchanging eternity? I take upon myself to say, that the unequivocal answer will be, No. Let him then ask himself what *would* yield him true satisfaction, since these things will not? Let him run over all possible and all imaginable sources of happiness, and you may depend upon it that he will be compelled at last to fix upon the pursuit of christian holiness, as the only true and soul satisfying happiness.

Am I asked how the reluctance men often discover to enter on a religious life and the difficulty of their first steps in it, can be reconciled to the doctrine I have maintained? I answer, that where such reluctance and difficulty ase experienced, it is because men have perverted their original nature by continued sin, and it has become unable to engage at once in its appropriate and intended sphere of action. It is because the soul has been the subject of a protracted disease and cannot at once perform all the functions of health. It is because their confirmed habits are all opposed to religion, and men cannot do with ease and delight what they have never been accustomed to do. It is not in religion alone that we observe the operation of this principle. It may be illustrated by any of the pursuits in which men engage. Take the merchant from his counting-house and commercial transactions, and place him amidst books in the scholar's study; and take the student from his retirement and solitary thoughts, and set him in the midst of the busy mart; — each would be wholy at a loss. Yet no one would think of attributing their awkwardness to any *natural* and *innate* repug

nance in the one to business and in the other to study; but only to the opposition between their previous habits and the situations in which they have been suddenly placed; and each might by patience and perseverance become habituated to his place, and easy and happy in it. Strike the fetters from the limbs of the long confined prisoner and bring him suddenly into open day; — you will observe that the first motions of his freed limbs are constrained and awkward, and his eyes are pained and dazzled; and you might as well infer from this fact that man has a natural preference of chains and darkness to light and liberty, as to infer from the struggles and misgivings of a newly awakened soul that it has a natural love of the bondage of sin and of the darkness of a worldly state, over the pure joys and spiritual glories to which it is invited in the gospel.

We learn from the subject we have been considering the only true test by which we should judge of our religious condition. The only question is respecting the present and actual state of our souls. Have the unseen and eternal objects of religion a prevailing and paramount influence over our hearts and lives? Do we embrace the great truths of the gospel with our hearts as well as our understandings? Are they not merely speculative truths, but settled principles of action? Do we rejoice in their truth? Are they sources of consolation and hope to us? Do we approve the pure morality of the gospel? Do we feel its beauty? Do we love the practice of it and enjoy the happiness of obedience to it? If we can honestly reply in the affirmative to questions like these, we are in the way in which the gospel was designed to lead us. The man-

ner in which we came into that state has nothing to do with the reality of our being in it. The question of our being in it or not is, as I have said, a question of fact, to be decided by examining our hearts as they are now, and not by looking at any process through which they may have passed in becoming what they are. The modes in which the providence and grace of God bring men into this state are various. One man may have enjoyed the blessing of a religious education. From the first dawn of reason, from the earliest kindling of affection, his mind and heart were directed to religious objects. He cannot recollect the time when he had not a regard for them. There never was a period when an entire change of heart was necessary for him. The only change he has or can experience is a gradual development of the religious principle, which grows with the growth and strengthens with the strength of his soul. Another man may have been a flagrant sinner, and may have been called to a sense of the sin and danger of his way, by some sudden dispensation of God's providence, or by some impressive inculcation of his word, or by some good thought suggested by his holy spirit in the hour of silence and meditation, and from that moment he may have repented, and commenced a reformation of his life and character. The time when such a man began to be a religious man may be perfectly perceptible both to himself and to all observers of his course. And in different cases the work may proceed with various degrees of regularity and rapidity. In by far the greater number, perhaps, the seed was dropped unseen, and the growth was imperceptible, until its presence was denoted by its fruits.

It may have fallen into a soil more or less congenial to its growth, it may have been more or less severely visited with blights and chills, and with drought and heat, and it may have brought forth fruit in various degrees of abundance; but still there are the fruits to show that a true seed was planted, and that it was not planted in vain.

Let us remember that the spiritual condition of the heart is not a fixed, but a progressive one. It is not a state into which a man may pass at a given moment, and afterward have nothing to do but to enjoy his security. Who can say that he literally loves God with all his heart? That he has submitted himself wholly to the divine will? That no rebellious wish or desire ever rises up in opposition to it? That all the energies of his soul are in constant and strenuous action to obey God? That a strong and vivid sense of the spiritual world is ever present to his heart? And that the things of earth have forever lost every undue influence over him? Who can say that he has attained to the purity, obedience and devotion exemplified by his Saviour? Yet this is simply the perfection of the regenerate state. So far as we fall short of this, so long as imperfection rests upon our character, so long as a single step remains to be taken in our religious course, the work of renewal is incomplete. God in his infinite mercy will accept the imperfect fruits of sincere endeavor; but the only proof by which we can assure ourselves of our sincerity, is never remaining satisfied with attainments and exertions already made and a continual desire and striving after higher perfection.

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MR TUCKERMAN'S

EIGHTH SEMIANNUAL REPORT

OF HIS SERVICE AS A

MINISTER AT LARGE IN BOSTON.

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REPORT.

To the Executive Committee of the

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

GENTLEMEN, — In my last Report, I spoke of the intellectually and morally neglected children in our city. I classed these children; and suggested the measures by which, as I believe, nearly the whole of them may be rescued from impending ruin. This topic is so very important, that I hope you will patiently bear with me while I again call your attention to it.

My wish is, in this Report, to attempt to show, that the most active and extensively influential of the causes to which abject poverty and crime are to be ascribed, lie not only near, and under the very eye of every individual, but that they are, above all others, within the influence of the means which God has given us, of securing the order, and of advancing the improvement and happiness of society. The causes to which I refer consist of those circumstances, the direct tendency of which is to vitiate and to corrupt the young. I know full well that there are instances of crime, and of poverty growing out of crime, the particular causes of which were not

developed during the season of youth. But I am quite satisfied that far the greatest part of the abject poverty, and of the recklessness in crime, which people either our prisons or alms-houses, or which is seen in our streets, or which gives insecurity to property and happiness in society, may be followed back to causes, which showed themselves most distinctly within the first fifteen or twenty years of life, and generally at a much earlier season; to causes which, at that period, are within our power, as those which lie beyond these limits are not. It is true, and ought to be known, and to be reiterated till it shall be felt, that if we were faithful to the means we have of healing the waters of society *here*, the amount of abject want, and of unprincipled and hopeless obduracy which would remain, would be so small, that we might dispense with more than half of our prisons and alms-houses, and yet find ample accommodations in those we should still have, for all the paupers and criminals for whom it would be necessary to make these provisions. The inquiry, then, is of paramount interest, what are those circumstances, the tendency of which upon the young who are brought under their influences, almost necessarily is their immediate moral corruption, and their subsequent poverty and crime? In answering this inquiry, I must go into some minuteness of detail.

I reply, the *first* is, the want of an education, both intellectual and moral, which would dispose and qualify them for apprenticeship at some useful employment. The *second* is, the want of regular and useful employment, from the age of fourteen, or fifteen, to that of twentyone years. This is an evil, which extends to

many who have received all the advantages for instruction which our schools could give them. And the *third* division of these circumstances consists of the temptations and facilities to intemperance, to dishonesty, and to corrupting passions and pleasures, which are directly offered to the young, or which are most reprehensibly left in their way, by those who have the charge of them. The exposures are peculiar, in these respects, of the children under fourteen years old, who are not in school; and of those from fourteen, or fifteen, to twentyone years of age, who have no regular and useful employment. But through the negligence or the evil example of employers or masters, they are many, and great too, even with respect to some who are apprenticed to useful occupations. Vague assertions on these subjects are of little use. We must appeal to facts.

I. Let me say a few words of those who are not receiving the education, which is necessary to qualify them for apprenticeship at some useful employment.

We have so long been accustomed to think and to speak with exultation of our school system, that many are brought to believe it is quite perfect. And not only so. There are not a few who reason from ourselves, in this respect, to our whole country, and can hardly believe that there is an American citizen who cannot read or write. But in all this there is a very great mistake. Disguise it as we may, there are many native Americans who are as ignorant of letters even as the untaught of the older countries of the world. And if it were not so, — if every adult American could read and write, and if we could prove all the utterly illiterate

among us to be foreigners, or the children of foreigners, what consolation would there be in the thought, when threatened with, or suffering under any public calamity, which has been brought upon us by an ignorant population, that this part of our population consists only of foreigners, or of the descendants of foreigners? Is not our country equally the home of many ten thousand foreigners, as of those who were born here? I have not been able to obtain information of the number of children in our State, who are growing up without receiving any of the advantages of our schools. The last published 'Abstract of School Returns,' prepared by order of the Senate of the Commonwealth, is that of 1829. But by the kindness of the Secretary of State, I have been permitted to examine the unpublished 'Abstract of 1830.' In the Abstract of 1829, it appears that returns were made only from 131 towns; and in 1830, only from 97 towns. In the former year, 173 towns failed to make the returns required of them; and in the latter year, no returns were received from 207 towns. Nor is this the only defect in these important documents. From the 131 towns which made returns in 1829, and which include Boston, Salem, Marblehead, Danvers, Newburyport, Gloucester, Concord, and other large towns, only fifty eight of those between fourteen and twenty one years of age, are reported to have been unable to read and write; and in the towns above named, except Boston, not one! Nor, with the exception of Boston, does it appear from the Abstract of 1830, that any town in the State contains an individual, between the ages of fourteen and twenty one years, who has not received a good common-school education. Of Boston, it is said

in the Abstract of 1829, 'few, if any native citizens, between fourteen and twentyone, are unable to read and write. How many foreigners is unknown.' And in the Abstract of 1830, 'the number between fourteen and twentyone, who are unable to read and write, is small, and principally foreigners.' But, including truants, who, if neglected, will soon be as illiterate as the most untaught, the number of children in our city, between five and fourteen years of age, who go to no school, is little short of four hundred. Nor do I doubt that there is an equal, or even a greater number, in the other towns in our State, who are growing up in equal ignorance.' I hope, therefore, that our Legislature will neither be satisfied with such returns as have hitherto been received from towns respecting their schools, and the children who should be in them, nor lightly pass over the neglect of towns to make the returns required of them. It is true that a large number, but it is far from being true that the whole, of the uneducated among us, are foreigners. These foreigners, however, will live and die among us; and will act their parts, for weal or wo, in our communities. Let us then look at a few statements, which I believe may be relied upon, of the numbers, not far from us, who have grown, or are growing up, as ignorant of letters, even as are multitudes of the paupers of whom we hear and read, in other sections of the world.

First. In a memorial of the Pennsylvania Society for the promotion of public schools, presented to the Legislature of that State in 1830, it is said, 'there are at least 400,000 in Pennsylvania, between the ages of five and fourteen years; and of these, that not 150,000

were in all the schools of the State.'* This fact, I am aware, will hardly be thought to be credible. But it has been reported to the Legislature, with at least an apparent belief of its truth, by the Governor of Pennsylvania.† The number of uneducated children in the city of Philadelphia, it is well known, is very great. But I am not willing to publish conjectures on this subject, and I have not been able to obtain any satisfactory information respecting it.

Again. At a public meeting of the friends of education in New Jersey, in 1828, a Committee was appointed to procure and publish information, in regard to the condition of the schools in that State. And from the Report of that Committee it appears, that 11,742 children were entirely destitute of school instruction; and that 15,000 adults were unable to read. In one county there were 1200 children who were not in any school; and in two other counties, forty districts were destitute of schools.‡

Once more. Returns are made to the Superintendent of common schools in New York, from the towns in that State; and the Superintendent makes an annual Report of these schools to the Legislature. The State is divided into 9062 school districts, of which 8630 have complied with the conditions of the statutes, by having schools kept by an inspected teacher, and by making returns to the commissioners of common-schools. In

* American Annals of Education, V. 1, 360.

† Gov. Wolf's Message to the Legislature of Pennsylvania, Dec. 8, 1830.

‡ American Annals of Education, V. 1, p. 362, 363.

these schools, 499,424 children have been taught during the year preceding the first of January, 1830; and the average time of instruction has been about eight months.' I believe, indeed, that in respect to its schools, the State of New York is in advance not only of Massachusetts, but of any State in the Union. The city of New York, however, is in this respect very far behind the rest of the State. We have the authority of the Superintendent of the common schools in the State, for the assertion that 'it is admitted there are 10,000 children in that city, who do not attend any school.'*

Is it asked, what are the inferences I could make from these statements? I answer, simply, that as far as the knowledge and the habits which are acquired at school, are salutary in their influences in the formation of character, and as far as a want of this knowledge and of these habits, tends to pauperism and crime, so far we are instructed by these facts respecting one of the means of preventing these great and terrible evils.

I would neither make any overcharged statements, nor press any facts to the support of a theory beyond their obvious and unquestionable bearing. If, therefore, there be any error in the above stated numbers, I shall very gladly see it corrected. And, should any one say that the number is great of those who can neither read nor write, and who yet have not fallen in-

* Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools in the State of New York, 1831. pp. 4. 16. 25. In Scotland, the proportion of the educated is one to every ten of the inhabitants. In England, one to every fifteen and three-tenths. In France, one to every seventeen and six-tenths. In Ireland, one to every eighteen. In Portugal, one to every eightyeight. In Russia, one to every three hundred and sixtyseven. American Annals of Education, V. 1, p. 115.

to crime; and that it is great also of those, who, with the best education, have become paupers and criminals; I admit the facts. But they form exceptions, and not a rule. There is a very great difference in the natural dispositions and propensities of the young; and, therefore, in their liableness, if I may so express myself, to moral infection. Some are uncontaminated, even after having lived long in the worst possible moral atmosphere; and some have even been made more resolutely virtuous by the daily spectacle of vicious example. Some, also, while surrounded by none but good influences, are hardly to be restrained from evil; and some, possessing the finest intellectual powers ever given to man, and reared with every possible outward advantage for their happy development, have debased those powers to the service of the lowest and most guilty passions of our nature; and have exhibited the spectacle of a ruin, as much more painfully affecting than that of the most time hallowed and once most magnificent temple, of mere dead matter, as the immortal spirit, destined for endless progress in knowledge and happiness, is a greater work than a temple made by the hands of man. But these also are exceptions, and do not form a rule.

In looking at the questions, how far is a school education a security from pauperism and crime? and, how far is a neglect of this education a cause of pauperism and crime? I would observe, first, that while this neglect is a very important circumstance in the production of these evils, and a circumstance which must not be lost sight of, it yet never acts alone in regard to them. The child under fourteen years old, who goes to no school, is not probably in any useful employment; and he is,

probably, with associates as idle as himself. If his parents are very poor, he will probably be sent out as a beggar; and every child who is a beggar, almost without exception, will become a vagrant, and probably a thief. Young as he is, he wants social excitement, and he must have it; and if that be not given to him by which he may be profited, he will probably seek and enjoy that by which he will be injured. The causes which lead to the neglect of his intellectual, in almost all cases, will lead also to the neglect of his moral education. It is indeed very seldom found, in regard to parents or the guardians of children, that they disregard the intellectual faculties of the young who are in their charge, while the moral nature is an object of any strong solicitude. Nor is this all. The children who are left by their parents to grow up in ignorance, are often made to minister to the idleness and intemperance of these parents; and they learn by the same means to procure their own vicious gratifications. These poor children, also, are seldom taken to any church; and Sunday, to many of them, is the most corrupting day of the week. On the other hand, the children who are *in* school, are generally attaining there some moral, as well as intellectual good. They are also far better taught at home, than are those who are not in any school. They generally go to church with their parents; and probably, likewise, receive the instructions of a Sunday school. They associate, too, with lads of their own age, who are of a far higher order of character than the ignorant and the idle. And as long as they are at school, they have in view, as the others have not, an apprenticeship at some useful occupation, by which they

may honorably provide for their own wants, and perhaps be the support of the age of their parents. Bring together these considerations, and they give no small importance to a school education, as a means of saving from pauperism and crime.

And in reply to those, who would leave a certain number uneducated, that they may thus be fitted and disposed for the lowest offices of life, I could observe, secondly, that if every child in our country, and in the world, between the ages of four and fourteen, were in a school; and if every child living, and to be born, should be kept from four to fourteen years of age, in as good schools as could be established, and should receive as much instruction as could be given to them, it would be found, that in the diversity God has made of human capacities, and in the wonderfully diversified dispositions of human nature, there is an ample provision for the whole number which is wanted for every service, however laborious, or even however revolting to others it might be, which is required for the comfort, or the order, or the ornament of social life. Educate the young as extensively and as perfectly as you can, and you can no more produce an equality of intellectual power, or of a spirit of enterprise which tends to an equality of wealth, than you can, by education, produce a condition of the human system, in which it shall not need food for its support. Here, then, I rest the claims of a school education, and the question of its influence in preventing poverty and crime.

I. The second of these circumstances is, the want of regular and useful employment from the age of four-

teen or fifteen, to that of twentyone years. This, I have said, is an evil which extends to many, who have received all the advantages for instruction which our schools could give them.

In the first place, however, let us look at the children who have not been in any school, and at the truants from our schools who have been struck from the list of the masters. They have now passed the age of fourteen years; and they are not only disqualified for the employments, in which a knowledge of reading, writing, and the first rules of arithmetic is required, but they are even more indisposed to any employment, which will abridge their liberty, or restrain them from their accustomed pursuits and indulgences. They wish still to live, as they have hitherto lived. They revolt from the thought of the authority of a master. And they are as closely bound to each other by a union of tastes, and objects, and gratifications, and habits, as they are widely separated in these respects from the most virtuous of their age. Some of them are the children of parents who have no sensibility to the evil of their condition; who have themselves hardly known a better condition; and whose example alone might have corrupted children, who were even strongly inclined to obedience and virtue. Others are the children of better, but of inefficient parents; of parents who do not, and think they cannot, control the waywardness which refuses submission to rule. And others, having lost their parents, have either fallen into the charge of those who have cared little for them, or have been left wholly to their own guidance. I suppose that we have as small a number of children of this class among us, as are to

be found in any city of the world with an equal population. But we have a sufficient number to produce a considerable amount of abject pauperism and crime. And, I ask, can it be otherwise, than that a large proportion of the children who are brought up to twenty-one years of age, ignorant, or almost wholly ignorant, of letters; free from all moral influence at home, or habitually and successfully resisting all moral influence there; who are daily associating for idle or vicious communion with each other; for the attainment of some vicious pleasure, or the accomplishment of some vicious purpose; who shrink from any labor, beyond that which is demanded to obtain the means for some personal and perhaps vicious end; who have learned, within the first twelve years of life, to love ardent spirits, though, perhaps, before that time they may not have been *accustomed* to drink them; who, even before that age, have acquired some skill in petty thieving, and are proficients in profaneness and deception; is it in the nature of things that children, thus living, or at least that far the greater number of them, should not, when they are men, become paupers, and criminals? I have not mentioned the female children of this class. But their exposures to moral ruin are scarcely less than those of boys. Let the number, then, of these children in our cities, in our large towns, and our villages, be correctly ascertained, and something will be done in the work of accounting for the extent of pauperism and crime. And let an inquisition be made of the numbers who have passed from this class of children to our prisons and almshouses, and the necessity will be wholly superseded of a long argument, either respecting the exposures of these children, or the true interest

of the intelligent and virtuous of society concerning them.

But these are not the only children who are exposed to depravity, even in its worst forms, from a want of regular employment. There are those in this number, who have continued in our schools through the term in which they were allowed to be in them; and others, who were taken from school at the age of eleven, twelve, or thirteen years, that they might earn a dollar a week for their parents, as errand boys in shops and offices. The last named of these children are generally sons of widows, who find in this service the means of paying their rent. Is it thought that this is at once a useful and an honorable employment of these boys? It is so, indeed, where their employers feel a parental interest in them, and provide for a continuance of the instruction from which they have been taken on leaving school, and exercise a moral superintendence over them, and endeavor to train them to preparation for an apprenticeship. But such parental watchfulness and care is not often exercised over them. It is too generally the case, that little progress in useful knowledge is made by these lads, after their entrance upon this course of life; and that associations are formed by them, and propensities and dispositions are indulged, which, instead of inclining and qualifying them for the steady and orderly labors of an apprenticeship, have the most direct tendency to fit them to fall into the class of idlers and vagrants. They are taken for these employments, with the intention, on the part of their parents, of apprenticing them when their term of service as errand boys shall have expired. But it is felt by these parents, that it is no small sacrifice to which they are called, when they

must relinquish the dollar a week which they have thus been accustomed to receive. A strong solicitude is therefore felt by them, if it be possible, still to obtain wages for the services of these children. It is often found difficult also by these mothers, and perhaps impracticable, at once, or even for a long time, to apprentice these children at any regular employment. They feel compelled, therefore, at once, to bear what they think they must bear from their idleness; to avail themselves of occasional opportunities to earn a little by their services when they can; and to live upon the hope, but seldom realized, of better things to come. These, and other children of poor widows; and children also who have both a father and a mother, but whose parents, either from negligence, or any other cause, fail to put them in the way of regular and useful occupation, soon pass the age at which they can be received as apprentices. They are then thrown entirely upon their own dispositions and resources; and too often acknowledge no restraining power, but that which they shall actually find themselves unable to resist, the authority of a civil officer. From the very circumstance of their manner of living, without rule, under no authority which they respect, with no important and useful end in view, and with little or no sense of accountableness, their reason and judgment become as weak and perverted, as their appetites and passions are prematurely strong and importunate. What, then, is to be looked for from children, who shall thus pass the time from eleven, or twelve, or fourteen, to twentyone years of age? What will probably, and what will almost necessarily be their habits, and characters? Will they now betake themselves to the labors of agriculture, or of the

work-shop? Some of them will be seamen. But they will generally continue to be, in character, what they were when they embarked in this service. Some, from a better natural disposition than the rest, which it may be has saved them from much of the corruption to which they have been exposed, will fall into the class of laborers, and perhaps may earn the means of their subsistence. But many of them, also, and from the causes to which I have referred, will be paupers and criminals; and in these cases, the very education they have received in school may minister even to their capacity in crime. — Consider carefully, then, the classes of those who have no regular employment before the time of their majority; the circumstances under which they are living; and the tempers, desires and habits they are forming; and look at the numbers of these young persons who are convicted of crime, before the law recognises them as freemen; and here, I think, will be laid open a very fearful source of pauperism and crime. The evil, however, I repeat, is within our reach, and consequently within the sphere of our responsibleness.

The third division of these circumstances consists of the temptations and facilities to intemperance, to dishonesty, and to corrupting passions and pleasures, which are directly offered to the young, or which are most reprehensibly left in their way by those who have the charge of them. The exposures, I have said, are peculiar, in these respects, of the children under fourteen years who are not in school; and of those from fourteen to twentyone years of age, who have no regular and useful employment. But through the negligence or the evil example of employers or masters, they are

many, and great too, even with respect to some who are apprenticed to useful occupations.

In the first place, then, allow me to remark, that while I would not ascribe the licentiousness, the dishonesty, or the crime of any character in society, to any single cause, — for the causes of these evils are many, and sometimes very complicated, — the fact of the very peculiar connexion between intemperance and abject pauperism and crime, which has been established beyond contradiction by the investigations which have been made of this subject within the last five years, demands the very serious attention not only of the statesman and the philanthropist, but of every parent, and of every individual who is interested in the well-being of the community in which he lives. Among the various methods taken by the Temperance Societies in our country, to affect the public mind in regard to the enormous evils which have grown out of the cheapness of ardent spirits, the various means adopted to make them as fascinating as possible, and the very reprehensible system of licensing their sale in the form of drams, to an extent to meet the demands of every one who is disposed or may be decoyed to purchase them, one has been, an extensive and careful examination of the records of prisons and almshouses, for the very purpose of learning what proportion of the inmates of those institutions have been brought to pauperism and crime by intemperance. These examinations have brought to light the facts, — before, indeed, supposed, but now proved, — first, that the instance can hardly be found of a convict, who, at the time of his conviction, was not intemperate; and, secondly, that three-fourths of the

inmates of almshouses were brought to the abjectness and degradation in which they are seen there, by intemperance. In view of these facts, then, I take the ground, that whatever goes to prove that intemperance is a cause, and a prevailing cause, of pauperism and crime, goes equally to prove, first, that every intemperate lad or young man, unless recovered from his intemperance, will probably fall into pauperism, or crime, or into both; and, secondly, that the temptations and the facilities to an early love and use of ardent spirits, are direct means, to the extent to which they operate, of producing paupers and criminals in the city, in the commonwealth, and in our country. The facts here assumed will not be doubted by any one who has attended to the evidence on which they rest. Nor will any one who admits the facts, reject the inferences I have made from them. The question, then, arises, how far may the intemperance, and consequently the pauperism and crime of manhood, and therefore the numbers in our prisons and almshouses, be fairly traced back to the temptations and facilities to intemperance which are placed in the way of children, and to the love and use of ardent spirits which are acquired by them, both in the city and in the country?

I begin with referring you to the exposures of children who are under fourteen or fifteen years of age. Let us first look at some of them in the poorer, and then at some in the more prospered classes.

The impression, I am aware, soon passes from the mind, of any description of scenes which we have ourselves never witnessed. And yet, till we can persuade others by personal observation to acquaint themselves

with the scenes of vice and misery which are around them, and from an actual knowledge of which they would learn their duties in regard to the vicious and miserable, as they cannot otherwise be learned, we must be content with bringing before them such poor descriptions as we may, of the evils which ought to excite a universal sympathy and concern; and which, if cared for as they should be, might to a great extent be remedied. How often have I wished that I could bring those, who have a strong general interest in the well-being of society, and whose opinions exert a most important influence where I have no power, into the families of poor and intemperate parents. There let them see in what wretched rooms these unhappy beings are sometimes lodged; rooms as cold as wide chinks and broken windows can make them; the poor, broken, and scanty furniture; and the bed, not unfrequently lying upon the floor, and without a bedstead; and, it may be, consisting only of straw or of shavings. There let them see to what deep degradation our nature may be brought, through abandonment to the sin in which these parents are living. Will it be said, that parents in this condition are beyond the reach even of hope? I think otherwise; for no one is to be considered, or treated, as beyond hope, while God shall spare him. But I am not now pleading for these parents. I would direct attention to *their children*. Here are boys and girls, with bodies which are seldom washed, and which are covered at best with filthy and tattered garments. These children probably go to no school; and they learn nothing but from the example of those with whom they associate. They are unaccustomed to any regularity in their meals, and they

look for their food perhaps almost as much from home, as at home. They are now, it may be, caressed with the extravagance of intoxicated affection, and now beaten with the extravagance of intoxicated anger. They are every day deceived by their parents, and they every day in turn deceive them. At one hour they are kept at work, to procure fuel, or perform some other service; and in the next are allowed to go where they will, and to do what they will. They every day hear profaneness, and see intemperance, and witness parental contests; and are daily the companions of those, who live amidst the same scenes, and are forming under the same influences. They are allowed, also, not only to drain the cup which an intemperate father or mother has not quite emptied, but their portion of it is sometimes given to them. If they are advised or encouraged by these guardians of their morals, it is to be more wary, more cunning, more artful. Not unfrequently, also, do these children fall into the service of the lowest of the profligate. They are ready for any guilty service within their power, by which they may earn anything; and they have not an association with wrong, but the fear of detection and of punishment. What, then, is to be expected from these children? Is it surprising, that very early they become greatly depraved? I have spoken, indeed, of the most degraded parents, and of the most exposed children. But there are more of these parents and children, even in our greatly favored city, than would be suspected by those who know those among whom they live only as they pass them in the street. And there are children of other poor parents, especially of poor widows, who, though

they have in this respect no evil example at home, are yet under but a feeble parental restraint; and are associates, and learners of the language, and sharers of the occupations and the pleasures of those, whose very homes are schools of the grossest depravity. I pray, then, that it may be known, and thought worthy of remembrance, that we have children of this class in our city, who, if neglected as they now are, as certainly as they live, will become paupers and criminals. And on whom will fall the heaviest responsibility for their guilt and misery, but on those to whom God has given all the means of saving them, and who fail to use these means for the purposes for which he gave them?

Again. There is a higher class of parents, who would shrink from a dependence upon charity, but who are hardly less negligent of the moral condition of their children. I refer to parents, some of whom are far from indifference respecting the education of their children for an apprenticeship, and for the means of self-support, as far as the education of the school is concerned. But, from ignorance, or inefficiency, or the want of a strong moral sensibility, or if they have religious and moral feeling, yet from a want of judgment, are unable to control, or at least do not control, their wayward children. These parents and children are without the circle of my own ministry. But very painful cases now and then occur, in which the effects are brought to light, and made known, of that evil communication which the children of whom I am now speaking have with those, who are lower in outward condition, and more depraved, than themselves. From the united tendencies of neglect, or of injudiciousness, or of inad-

equate authority at home, and of vicious excitement and example abroad, there are children of this class who become truants from school; who, as idlers and companions of the vicious, are led to acts of petty pilfering; who acquire a taste for the pleasures of the theatre; who practise with their companions such modes of gambling as they may; and who occasionally earn small sums for small services, which, like any money they may otherwise obtain, are expended for gratifications, each one of which advances them further in iniquity. The excitements and indulgences which they find at the theatre exert over them a very corrupting influence. I have no doubt, indeed, that a considerable number of the lads of whom I am speaking, are corrupted principally by their love of theatrical exhibitions. But when it is considered, that they are daily losing the little knowledge they had obtained at school; and are living almost without any law, but that of their appetites and passions; hearing and seeing every day, what, if possible, they should never hear or see; and almost without restraint, are encouraging and strengthening each other to that which they should never do; it will not seem strange if they should be alike disqualified for, and indisposed to, the restraints of a regular and useful occupation. Some of them may, and will be, rescued from the dangers which threaten them, by the persevering efforts of their immediate friends. And some will be recovered, because while equally exposed as others, they have a better moral temperament; or because, while at home, they have been under better antagonist influences. But not a few of them, if left unregarded, will be the victims of early bad

associations, propensities and habits, miserable themselves, and the bane of society. But is the evil, even with respect to them, irremediable? I think not. And if it be not, where lies the chief blame of their guilt and wretchedness, but with those to whom God has given the means of their salvation?

I have spoken of the moral exposures of those who are under fourteen years old. But still greater are the exposures, in these respects, of those between fourteen and twentyone years, who are living without any regular employment. These, almost without exception, fall into intemperance; and a large proportion of them are pilferers. I have distinctly spoken of these lads on a former occasion, and I therefore here make only a passing reference to them. Their claim, indeed, is loud, to more than a passing thought, or a momentary recollection of their condition. Would that it might excite the sympathy and interest which it justly demands from us!

There is, however, yet another class of those between fourteen or fifteen and twentyone years old, who are peculiarly exposed to pauperism and crime. I refer to those who have obtained employment for this critical season of life, but who, either through the negligence, or the evil example of their masters, are exposed to great and pressing temptations. Such is the condition of apprentices who know that their masters live in the daily practice of drinking ardent spirits. Who can doubt whether this knowledge will be held to be a sufficient sanction of the practice, where there is even but a slight inclination to indulge it? The custom, also, of the eleven and four o'clock dram in the work-

shop, and at labor abroad, has made drunkards of many lads, who would otherwise never have been disposed to drink ardent spirits. This custom is very far from being what it was. But there are those who still retain it; and a more effectual means could hardly be devised for the promotion of intemperance, and its concomitant sins. It is to this custom, more than to any other cause, that the intemperance of our country towns is to be ascribed. Boys, there, not only drink with those with whom they work in the fields, but they share the drink of those with whom they labor. And if this drink be rum, how can it be that they should not be lovers of rum? And there are those, too, in other, and as they think, in higher employments, to whom the screened Soda Shop is as fatal as the more undisguised tippling shop is to those who resort to it. To these allurements to iniquity, add the fascinations and the corruptions of the theatre, addressed as they are, to so great an extent, to the lowest passions of our nature; and, in these combined influences I think you will see very powerful excitements to dishonesty, intemperance, profligacy, and moral ruin. — I pray for a serious consideration of these circumstances of the moral exposure of the young. If pauperism and crime are to be effectually prevented or remedied, we must go to their sources. And if we have but a disposition, we have ample means beside, of checking and of overcoming these evils, to an extent to produce a change in society, which has never yet been wrought in it, and an enlargement of human happiness, which has never been experienced.

There is a spring of pauperism and crime, which presents itself in this connexion, at which I have not even glanced, only because I could not do any justice to my

views of it, in the cursory notice which is all that I could here take of it. I refer to the influence of the habits and the example of the more prospered classes, not only upon the young in those classes, but upon the dispositions and tastes and habits of the whole mass of society. This, I am aware, is a very delicate and difficult topic. It is, however, a plain matter of fact, that where, as with us, there is no law of entail, property seldom descends beyond the third generation of a family. And why? Obviously, in part, because the expectation of inheriting property indisposes and disqualifies the young for regular, self-denying, and persevering labor; and, in part, from the consequent vanity, extravagance, and sensual indulgence, for which an ample inheritance for all the purposes of virtue, usefulness, and happiness, is found to be utterly inadequate. Let any one look about him, and ask, who were the grandfathers and the fathers of our rich men? and who were the fathers and grand parents of our paupers and criminals? and he will find, that it is not poverty alone which produces poverty. And let any one consider, till he understands, the descending influence of example, and then look at the tendency of much of the example which is continually wending its way from the high grounds to the very lowest depths of social life, and he will need no labored argument to convince him, that the rich are in truth accountable for much of the abject poverty of the world; and that right sentiments, christian sentiments of property, and of human relations and duties, among the rich, are to be among the most effectual of the means of salvation from pauperism and crime. — I cannot here enlarge upon this topic.

But I hope to be able to speak more freely of it on a future occasion.

But before I speak of measures, either remedial or preventive, let me add a few facts, to corroborate some of the statements I have here made. My means of information are not as large as I could wish upon these subjects. But the facts I have to offer will throw some light on the topic of which I have spoken.

First, then, let me adduce the testimony of the Superintendent of the House of Refuge in New York.

From the first of January, to the thirtyfirst of December, 1830, the number of children received into that institution was one hundred and fortyfour. Of this number, seventyone could not read, and twenty of the seventyone did not know a letter. Thirtythree of the one hundred and fortyfour are all that know anything of arithmetic, and twentytwo of these thirtythree were in addition. The average age of these children was eleven years and six months; and of the one hundred and fortyfour, only sixty were of American parentage.

Of the children received into the Refuge since it was opened on the first of January, 1825, to the first of January, 1831, the whole number is eight hundred and thirtyfour. Of these children, fiftyseven had been in Bridewell once; twentysix had been there twice; three had been there four times; five, five times; and one ten times. Thirteen had been in the Penitentiary six months; three had been there twelve months; four eighteen months; one, thirty months; and two, thirtysix months. And four had been in the State Prison. The average age of the whole number was twelve years and two months.

Of the parents of these children, thirtyfive had been

in Bridewell ; sixteen in the Penitentiary, and two in the State Prison. Four hundred and fortysix were intemperate. Nine were keepers of houses of ill fame. Ten were allowed by their parents to steal. And the parents of eight received stolen goods from their children.*

Again. In a note in my last report, I stated that of ninetythree children then in our House of Reformation, twentyfive could not read when they were sent there, and fiftythree had been truants from our schools. I add only a short extract from a note which I have recently received from Mr Wells, the Superintendent and Chaplain of that institution. ' I cannot call to mind one boy I have had with me over fifteen years old, — and I have had thirty such, — who had not, to more or less excess, been accustomed to drink ardent spirits ; and fivesixths of these may fairly be considered to have been intemperate. Of those between twelve and fifteen years of age, I think that three-fourths would have allowed themselves in the same indulgence, whenever they had an opportunity to do it ; and that two-thirds of these were in the way to confirmed intemperance.'

Again. The House of Refuge in Philadelphia was opened for proper subjects of the Institution in May, 1828. The whole number who have been received into it, is two hundred and eightynine boys, and ninetythree girls. Total, three hundred and eightytwo. Of the two hundred and eightynine boys, I am told by the Superintendent, that one hundred and eightytwo could not read, and that only thirtyone knew anything of

* Sixth Annual Report of the Managers of the Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents in the City and State of New York.

arithmetic. Their average age was near fifteen years. Seventy of these boys had previously been in prison. 'And,' adds the Superintendent in a letter I have received from him, 'I do not hesitate to say, that intemperance has supplied the Institution with two thirds of the above number, either by its influence directly upon themselves, or through their parents, or those who had the care of them.'

Again. Before the establishment of the House of Refuge in New York, more than five hundred young persons were annually committed in that State, either as criminals or vagrants; and we learn from the Superintendent of the Penitentiary at Bellevue, that of the children committed there, not more than one in eight could read and write at the time of committal. The commitments of this class of offenders have been fewer in our city. But I have seen boys under fifteen years old in our common jail, because, having been convicted of a petty offence, they could not pay the fine of a dollar and the costs of court; and within six years, about a hundred, including colored boys, have been sent to our House of Correction. Such, also, have been the recommitments of these lads, after having been once sent to that school of sin, that seventeen of them represent sixty commitments. These lads were sent there for various offences. But a considerable number of them were sent specifically for intemperance; and it is a matter of notoriety, that far the largest number of them, whatever were the offences of which they were convicted, were accustomed to drink ardent spirits whenever they could obtain them. I have known lads in that prison, who were decidedly drunkards before they were twelve years old; and who have again and

again been there for intemperance before they were fifteen years old. Now it is brought almost to an absolute certainty, that if these children could have been placed in our House of Reformation, nearly every one of them might have been recovered from intemperance and from disposition to crime. Placed, however, as they have been, it is about as certain that every one of them will be intemperate through life, and either paupers or criminals. The number here stated is indeed small. But is it too small to be worthy of very serious regard, even in view only of our own immediate interests? Will the depredations they will probably make upon the property of others be small? Will the cost of supporting them in prisons and almshouses, at the expense of the honest industry of others, be small? But, above all, looking only to this number, and seeing them in the connexions in which our religion brings them before us, is our responsibility in regard to them small? I appeal alike to interest and to conscience, repeating only my own settled conviction, that if half the zeal were felt among us for the salvation of children of this class, which is felt for objects which have no comparative claim upon public interest, nearly the whole of them might be saved. A regard only to economy, however, will do little or nothing in this case. If higher principles cannot be awakened in the cause of these, and of other equally exposed children among us, they will continue to be, as they have been, *lost*.

Again. There is yet another class of facts which furnish an important argument for Houses of Refuge, or of Reformation. I refer to the facts which illustrate the tendency of short terms of imprisonment for the first offence. The keeper of the Glasgow Bridewell, which

is a penitentiary jail on the plan of strict solitary confinement, states, that he has 'observed that offenders committed for the first time for only a short period, almost invariably return to Bridewell for new offences. But if committed for a long period, they return less frequently. This fact is established by the following table, formed on an average of ten years, ending 25th of December, 1825:

Of prisoners sentenced to 14 days' confinement, there were returned for new crimes, about	. . . . .	75 per cent.
Of those sentenced	to 30 days	60 " "
	to 40 days	50 " "
	to 60 days	40 " "
	to 3 months . . .	25 " "
	to 6 months . . .	10 " "
	to 9 months . . .	7½ " "
	to 12 months . . .	4 " "
	to 18 months . . .	1 " "
	to 24 months . . .	none.

And during these ten years, ninetythree persons were committed for the first time for two years.' Now let it be considered, that if a lad shall be imprisoned for a first offence, it must almost necessarily be for a short time. His age will plead for him. And the character of his first offence will not, probably, justify a long imprisonment in a jail or a penitentiary. But this first imprisonment will probably be an extinguisher of every moral sentiment in his heart. On the other hand, if he shall be sent to an Institution for Juvenile Delinquents, it will not be for a specified time. Nor, in truth, will he feel that the stigma of a prison convict is impressed upon him. Children who might have been sent to prison for one or two or three months, for crime, are

sent to our House of Reformation for instruction and discipline, till it shall be thought proper by those who have there the charge of them, to placé them out as apprentices. And even when apprenticed, they are still so far in the care of the Directors of the Institution, that these Directors hold the masters of these children to be responsible to them; and the children can and do look to these Directors, and to the Superintendent in whose immediate charge they have been placed, as their legal guardians. I would respectfully submit these facts, and the argument deduced from them, to the consideration of those, whose opinion and influence will be for moral deliverance or for moral destruction to many hundreds of the children of our city.

Again. Of three hundred men who have been in the Sunday School of the Auburn State Prison, eightyfive did not know the alphabet; and two hundred were able to read only in easy lessons for children, and by spelling some of the words.*

Again. I am told by the indefatigable Secretary of the Prison Discipline Society, on the authority of the chaplain of the prison in Wethersfield, Connecticut, that there are a few less than two hundred convicts in that prison; and that, of these, fortytwo per cent cannot write; sixteen per cent cannot read; thirtytwo per cent were deprived of parental protection before they were ten years old; and twenty per cent more met with a similar deprivation before they were fifteen years old.

Again. For the answers to the following questions, I am indebted to the kindness of the very respectable chaplain of the State Prison in Charlestown. It is

* Report of the Auburn Prison. In Senate, Jan. 24, 1831.

proper to remark, the number of convicts who were personally examined by Mr Curtis, with reference to these inquiries, is two hundred and fiftysix.

1st. How many of the convicts in the State Prison in Charlestown did not know the alphabet at the time of their commitment? Answer, 20.

2d. How many could read only in easy lessons for children? Answer, 21.

3d. How many could not write? Answer, 64.

4th. How many were accustomed to use ardent spirits before they were 16 years old? Answer, 127.

5th. How many of the convicts do you believe were men of intemperate habits? Answer. I am satisfied that at least three-fourths of the convicts in this, and other prisons with which I have been conversant, were men of intemperate habits.

6th. Of how many were one, or both parents, intemperate? Answer, 50.

7th. How many were guilty of petty thefts before the age of 16 years? Answer, 45.

8th. How many were brought up without any regular employment? Answer, 82.

9th. How many, before the age of 21, left their parents without their consent? Answer, 68.

10th. How many, before their conviction, lived in a general violation of the Lord's day? Answer, 182.

11th. How many are foreigners? Answer, 48.

In a note appended to the 9th question, respecting those who early left their home without the consent of their parents, Mr Curtis says, — 'On this subject I would remark, that, in addition to the number here stated, many lost one, or both of their parents, during their childhood or youth; and thus were thrown upon the

world without that guardian care, which is so important in the first stages of life. And many others, who left home with the consent of their parents to learn some trade or business, left their masters or employers before the expiration of the time for which they were apprenticed, and thus fell into the paths of the destroyers.'

The largest number of these facts has been obtained from the confessions of the prisoners. I leave them without comment, respectfully commending them to the consideration of those to whose judgment and influence, under Providence, we are to look for the character of our institutions, and the well-being of our society.

Is it asked, what are the remedies of these evils, and what the means for their prevention? I answer, that they are not far off; nor, if we were truly disposed to avail ourselves of them, difficult to be obtained. But little thought or care is yet given to these subjects, compared with the greatness of the interests which are comprehended in them. Public sentiment is yet vague respecting the causes of pauperism and crime; and new and more efficient measures should be taken, to bring these subjects, in all their relations and bearings, before the whole body of our citizens. I would say, therefore, in the first place, that if a few of our most intelligent and philanthropic men, men of leisure and influence, would unite for the study of these subjects; not merely, or principally, by consulting books, but by an extensive personal communication with the poor and with criminals; if these gentlemen would meet frequently, — for example, one evening in every week, — to bring together their facts, and to compare their opinions; if they would occasionally publish these facts and opinions,

with the sanction of their names; and, when they shall see clearly what are the demands of justice, of humanity, and of religion, if they would combine their efforts, now for the suppression of one, and now of another, of the springs of evil, and now to obtain one, and now another establishment, for the salvation and greatest happiness of those, who must otherwise be irretrievably lost to all the higher purposes of their being; a great and glorious reform might soon be effected in our city. Am I told, that the plan of such an association is impracticable? I ask, why? And I appeal to the sober judgment of the intelligent, the affluent and influential. Is a greater service here demanded, than is due from those whom God has greatly blessed, to the poor, and degraded, and miserable around us? Is it more than God will require from those, to whom he has given the means of saving and blessing hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of their race? There is no service on earth from which a higher good will result to those who engage in it. A few judicious and energetic minds, combined and resolved to accomplish all which they may for the suppression of pauperism and crime, would accumulate for themselves in this work a better treasure than all their wealth, let them be as rich as they may; and in a few years might do more for the advancement of society, than, without these services, would probably be accomplished in half a century.

I would, however, and with all due deference, call attention to some of the measures, both remedial and preventive, which I think would engage the earliest interests of such an association as I have named.

First, then, let me say, there should be a Superintendent of the common schools in our Commonwealth.

This office is held by the Secretary of State in New York; and the good is incalculably great which has resulted to that State from the very able Reports which this officer, for the term of ten years, has laid before the New York Legislature. I have referred to the very defective returns which are made from the schools in our State; and such they will continue to be, till they shall be looked for from an executive officer of the government, whose duty it shall be to procure them. Beneficial results may be anticipated from the measures which are taking by the American Institute of Instruction, for the advancement of education over our whole country; and we hope that this new, and rising association will do much to excite and to aid the Legislatures of our States. Massachusetts needs this excitement and aid less than many other States in our Union. But a legal requisition, which could not be evaded, of faithful annual returns from all the common schools in our State, and of annual reports of the Superintendent of these schools, to be printed and given to every legislator, and made accessible to all who may wish for information upon the subject, would do much at once for the guidance of our legislators and for the improvement of these schools. If other demands of our State Legislature are answered or met as are those which are made respecting the schools in the Commonwealth, there must even be more darkness in the work of making, than there is in that of administering the laws.

Again. I have repeatedly referred to the children between the ages of seven and fourteen years, who are disqualified for and cannot be received into our grammar schools. For these children, schools should be provided either by the city or by private charity. I

have referred also to the truants, and the other classes of vagrant children; and to those without employment, who are not yet vagrants, but if left uncared for, will probably become paupers and criminals. Shall these children be abandoned to the ruin that is before them? Shall we continue to nourish, in the very bosom of our society, a class or classes of those, who, if unregarded by us in their moral condition, will be the bane of the generation that is to succeed us? Let the charge be committed to one or two officers, who shall be kind but energetic men, of sending to our House of Reformation all those children, for whose arrest as vagrants or criminals, the law has already made provision; and you will not only save those for whom this provision shall be made, but through the same instrumentality, you may restore to our schools all the truants who may safely be returned to them; and within a few years, hundreds of children, male and female, would be rescued from intemperance, dishonesty and dissoluteness. I have before spoken upon this subject, and will not therefore now dwell upon it.

Our Sunday schools are doing much, but they might do far more, for the salvation of large numbers from most imminent exposure to all that can vitiate and debase the mind and character. I would say to the Sunday school teacher, Covet above all things, in this service, the instruction and salvation of the poorest, the most neglected, abject and vicious children whom you can find; and make your weekly visits to the parents of the children whom you instruct, and be their christian friend. Then will you be an instrument for accomplishing the highest purposes of this most excellent institution. It is indeed delightful to teach good children, who have virtuous parents, and who are even disposed

to do more than their instructer would require of them. But happier is he, as well as a greater benefactor of his race, who shall aim at the higher object, with God's blessing, of softening the obdurate mind; of recovering to knowledge and virtue the little one who has gone astray, and who had no one to guide him; and of preparing one and another, who would otherwise have sunk into sin and misery, to find their existence a good to themselves and others, and to look with a christian hope to the eternal life that is before them.

I anticipate much good, also, from our recently formed City Temperance Society, and would earnestly recommend the formation of Temperance Societies in all our towns. That they may exert much influence, however, either as a remedy or a preventive of pauperism, the intelligent and influential must give them their countenance and support. If they who form and direct public sentiment will enlist in this cause, the result will be a gradual, but certain change of sentiment in the multitude. And even if no improvement shall be made in our license laws, or even if they should be wholly abolished, I believe there is wisdom and virtue enough among us, should they be combined for this end, in no long time to make our cities, and our whole country, as distinguished for sobriety, as they are, or even have been, for the blessings of liberty and of abundance.

Again. Our Savings Bank is a very valuable auxiliary, as a preventive both of pauperism and of crime. But this institution is doing little for the poor, compared with what it would do for them, if proper means were employed for the suppression of intemperance. There are hundreds of families, now dependent on charity, and receiving charity, and which would sometimes suffer as we have no right to leave human beings to suffer, but

through charity, which yet might not only be able to provide for their daily support, but to lay by the means of providing for their comfort in sickness and old age, if they were but temperate. If ardent spirits were used as they should be, only as a medicine, the deposits of the poor in the Savings Bank would be quadrupled, and the necessity superseded of more than half the city tax for the poor, and of more than half the contributions now required to the funds of benevolent societies.

Another means of great importance, at once for the remedy, and the prevention of these evils, is, *a ministry for the poor of cities, commensurate with the extent of that part of their poor population, which is not in regular connexion with the religious societies of cities.* There is a considerable degree of sensibility in our own city to the claims of this ministry. We have five ministers for the poor, and two for seamen. But this ministry is not yet estimated even among ourselves as it should be. It is not in any view second in its claims to the ministry established in our churches. It is neither less distinctly required by Christianity, nor by human wants. It is not in any degree less important in regard to the highest immediate interests of society, nor may less be hoped from it in respect to all which constitutes the most enduring good of man. Its maintenance, and the provision of fit instruments for it, ought indeed to engage the thought and care of our churches, and of all who feel an interest in the moral order of society, equally as the chosen ministry of these churches. How, indeed, are the lessons of christian piety and virtue, the consolations and supports, the restraints and encouragements of our religion, ever to be known to tens and to hundreds of thousands in the cities of Christendom, but through a ministry exclusively consecrated to the service of the

poor? How wonderful, — how passing strange is it, that such a ministry is not everywhere to be found in the cities of the christian world! How absurd is the assumption, in respect to cities, a third or a half of whose inhabitants are never brought within the pale of their establishments for social worship, — a third, or a half of whose inhabitants, are hardly recognised as beings of the same nature with their more prospered neighbors, simply because they are poor, and ignorant, and vicious; that is, simply because they are in the very condition from which Christ came to save them; — how absurd, I repeat, is the assumption, that these are *christian cities!* Are these poor, and ignorant, and vicious fellow beings, less dear to God, or less accessible to christian influences, than their more intelligent and prospered neighbors? Are their vices, on the whole, more injurious either to themselves or to society? And if Christianity is ever to be dispensed to them, how can it be, but through the interest which the intelligent, and the rich, and the virtuous shall feel in providing for them an intelligent, and a devoted ministry? A truly christian sensibility to this claim of our religion upon the more prospered classes; a sensibility to it, which will be satisfied only by obtaining a ministry for the poor, in character and extent such as Christianity requires; a feeling of its importance, which will secure fit instruments for it, because it will not cease to demand, till it obtains them; — this state of feeling in the intelligent, and affluent, and virtuous in cities, whenever it shall be stongly called forth, will make an era in the history of our religion. Would that God would raise up some one, who can reach the ears and hearts of men as I cannot! I am not more certain of anything, than I am that this ministry among ourselves is conducing

to great good. But what I pray for, is not a merely occasional, and temporary service in this office; not a service to be rendered either by the young, who are at school for another, and as they think, a higher ministry in the churches of the more prospered; or by the old and worn out, who have expended all their energies in other labors. There is wanted here the fulness of human strength, physical and moral; an intellect and a judgment, which will command respect from the minds with which they are brought into connexion; and a deliberate choice, which is not to be changed, of this service above all other services. These is here wanted, too, that uniformity and continuance of influence which can be obtained only from *the permanence of the minister in his office*. Such a ministry, if committed to proper instruments, will gradually throw more light on pauperism and crime, than may be looked for from all other sources. And it will do more, than can be done by almost any other means, to save vast masses of our fellow beings from want and wretchedness and ruin.

There is yet another means of arresting and of suppressing these great evils, which I name the last, because, while it is the first in importance, it seems to be the hardest to be brought to application. Allow me, in a few words, to explain myself upon this subject.

We live in a very benevolent community. But Christianity requires a far higher benevolence than that of giving money. Its aim is, to unite men as a family of brothers. Whatever may be our property, our intelligence, our office, or our titles, Christianity requires us to recognise the poor beggar and the convicted criminal, as the children of our Father, and possessors of a common nature with ourselves. They have fallen, — at least, tens of thousands of them fallen, — under

circumstances, in which if we had ourselves been, we might have sunk as low as they are. And from whence arose those circumstances? From the fault of the individuals suffering under them? Sometimes, without doubt. But I have referred to circumstances, and I might have referred to many more, which, though not within the control of the individuals who are brought by them to abjectness and crime, may be controlled and entirely changed by others; and which, brought under christian influences, would save thousands from degradation and wretchedness. This view of the condition of society, and of christian duties with respect to it, demands an attention which has never yet been given to it. Men have so long been told that poverty and crime are unfathomable gulfs; that their springs, or the causes producing them, are beyond human power; and that, to a great extent, they are alike necessary and irremediable evils; that, even by multitudes of the wise and good, nothing is deemed more chimerical, more a mere dream of enthusiasm, than a proposition to lay open the causes of these evils and the means by which far the largest amount of them may be remedied or prevented. And yet I am quite as sure that Christianity has given us these means, and that they are entirely sufficient for these ends, as I am of the existence of pauperism and crime. And I am quite as sure, too, that the errors of judgment, and the mistakes in conduct, into which not only legislators, but many others, have fallen on these subjects, are attributable wholly to the fact, that losing sight of christian sentiments of human relations, dependencies and obligations, they have looked alike for the causes and the cure of these evils, where neither was to be found. The poor and criminals have generally been regarded only in their civil re-

lations; as members of the body politic, who are to be affected only by political ordinances; and respecting whom the great question has been, how may they most effectually be coerced? or, what is the immediate cost which must be incurred for them? No error can be more vital than this. Sunk and degraded as we see them, even the lowest and the worst of these unhappy beings has a moral nature; and moral as well as physical powers and wants. Many, too, even of the lowest and the worst, by wise preventive measures, might have been saved from the degradation in which we see them. But you might as well attempt to raise them from their degradation by any other than moral means, as to meet the demands of their hunger by giving them air. Is it asked, what provisions are made by Christianity for the accomplishment of this great redemption? I answer, that they are to be found, not in the peculiar doctrines of any sect in Christendom; but, as I have already said, in a christian sense of human relations, — of the connexion into which Jesus Christ intended to bring man with man, — and of our responsibilities for all our means of usefulness. And is it asked, how is this mighty change to be wrought through means so simple? I answer, let all the intelligent, the affluent and influential among us, who call themselves Christians, bring home to their own souls what Christ has taught uponthe topics to which I have here referred, and there would not then be a single poor or vicious family or individual among us, which would not soon be brought within the sympathies of our religion. How many widows, now suffering under the most distressing embarrassments and perplexities, would then be comforted and encouraged, aided in the direction of their industry, and made comparatively happy? How many intemperate men and wo-

men, whose greatest excesses arise from the feeling that they are outcasts and uncared for, might be recovered to a sense of character and to virtue? How many children, both of virtuous and of vicious poor parents, under the restraints and encouragements of this new alliance, might be recalled from vagrancy and filial disobedience, placed and kept in our schools, in due time apprenticed at useful employments, and made respectable and happy members of society? How many filthy families might be made cleanly? How many families, now living in disorder and wretchedness, principally because they have no connexion with any one who is not as low as themselves, might thus be taught, and made to feel, the blessings of order, and foresight, and providence for the time to come, and mutual respect, and care for each other's happiness? How would the distresses of sickness among the poor be thus alleviated? From how many moral dangers, from which they know not how to escape, would they thus be rescued? And is there a man who has a disposition for this service, who might not find leisure for it? Or is there a man who has a christian feeling for his suffering brother, who would not soon acquire a tact, if tact be required, for this service? This feeling of relationship, and this connexion of the classes of society, is one of the most obvious of all the dictates of Christianity; and nothing short of Christianity will ever bring about any great and permanent melioration of the condition of the poor, or any great and permanent means for the prevention of pauperism and crime.

One word more respecting the most important of all the claims of charity, and I have done. One word more in regard to the young, who are peculiarly exposed to pauperism and crime. I have referred to these child-

ren in the city, and the country. And, let me appeal in their behalf to all in the city and the country who feel the ties of a common nature with those around them. I could call upon the prospered parents who are happy, and upon those who are unhappy, in their children. I would call upon the latter by their fears and by their sufferings, and upon the former by all which they enjoy in the immediate virtue and in the cheering hopes of their offspring, to look with sympathy and pity upon the exposed children of the poor; and now to select one, and now another, whom it shall be their aim and resolute endeavor, to bring to instruction and to virtue, and thus to save from crime and ruin. I would call upon those who have but just started in the career of manhood, — upon young men, who have but just begun to act for themselves, each to signalize the beginning of his course, — I mean not in the eye of the world, but of his own heart, and of his Maker, — by recovering, and preparing for a life of usefulness, some child who is wringing his, or her mother's heart with sorrow; or, some one who has not a parent to care for his or her condition, and who, without the interposition of a christian friend, will soon, perhaps, be beyond the reach of this best exercise of human benevolence. No young man, who shall thus have been the instrument of saving a single child, will, through his life, find his heart closed against the appeals of human suffering. — I would call upon benevolent wives and mothers, to take into their especial charge the exposed female children, who, if not soon brought under the influence of christian judgment and affection, will soon be carried to the utmost extreme of human guilt, and obduracy and debasement. — I would call, too, with all possible respect, upon our civil authorities, and upon the ministers of religion, both in the city and the country; and implore their care for those, who, them-

selves ignorant, inexperienced, reckless, are pursuing the way to their own destruction, either because they have no one to guide them in the way in which they should go, or because they will not submit to parental control. There are such children in the country, as well as in the city; and many such there will continue to be, till, by a wider sense of christian obligations in regard to them, and a consequent more active christian care of them, a wiser and better generation shall be produced than is now upon the stage. And how, indeed, is this better generation to be produced, but through this salvation of the young? And how is this salvation to be accomplished, but through the sympathies and the energies of christian benevolence in those who have but to resolve, with God's blessing, that it shall be attained, and it will be obtained? Here is a field for the labors of christian charity, where good to an incalculable extent may be done, at little or no expense, but of time and of affection; and where a good may be achieved, eternal at once to him or her who does it, and to him or her for whom it is done. In one word, I would say to all who wish to do good, whether they have much or little to give to those who are in want, — to all who would, if they could, be benefactors of their generation, — determine and strive, to save at least one truant, one vagrant, one vicious child, who, if no friendly, no christian hand be stretched out for his or her deliverance, will fall into the abyss either of pauperism or of crime. Place and keep one child in school, who would not otherwise be there. Be instead of a parent to one child, who would otherwise be without a protector. Be the coadjutor of at least one parent, who otherwise could not provide for the instruction of his or her children. Seek the satisfaction of seeing at least one child of the poor, who

might otherwise have travelled to death in the ways of sin, walking, through your guidance and care and encouragement, in the paths of virtue, usefulness, and happiness. I know of no good of earth and time which is greater than this. And could I obtain the ear of those who have fortune, and leisure, and all the means of being the greatest benefactors of their race, and who are yet doing little or nothing to improve the character and condition of those below them, I would say to them, you know not what means of personal good and happiness you are disregarding, while you neglect your opportunities to save one and another of those, who are perishing from the want of that very care and kindness, which you might so easily extend to them. A recurrence to your agency in this unostentatious work of christian benevolence, will bring more gladness to your heart in the prospect of death, than a remembrance of all your worldly success. And in the feeling that you have thus been instrumental to the salvation of one of these little ones, you will have a richer treasure when you shall stand before God, than if, having lived only for yourself, you had possessed the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.

My visits, during the past year, have been divided between four hundred and eightyfive families. My connexion with a large number of these families has, however, been of short duration. I have been called to some of them for services which were soon rendered, and which did not require a continuance of my visits to them; and from some of them I have been separated by their removal, I have not known where. This last is a cause of separation from many families, with whom I should gladly continue my connexion. I have known one family which has removed twentytwo times in a year.

But the number is great also of those who are as permanently in my pastoral charge, as the members of a religious congregation are in the charge of their minister. Nor can I doubt whether my ministry is greatly useful to a very large number of those with whom I am connected in it. To the last five years which I have devoted to this service, I look back as beyond comparison the best years of my life; and for the happiness of these years, I would forever ascribe thanksgivings to Him, who has granted me the privileges of this ministry. To the benefactors of my poors' purse I return all I can, my hearty gratitude; and I beseech them for a continuance of their kindness. It has relieved, and it has saved, from a very great amount of suffering; and I believe has been conducive as well to the cause of virtue, as to the increase of comfort among the poor. I am, however, far more solicitous that a due regard should be called forth among us to the cause of remedying and of preventing poverty and crime, than to the immediate and even the most pressing necessities of the poor. Every individual owes something to this cause, and every one should feel that he has something to do for it. May God awaken us all to a sense of our true interest and duty in respect to it! Let us be faithful to the means he has given us of correcting and repressing these evils, and as surely as it is not his will that sin and misery shall triumph in our world, so surely will he not withhold his blessing from our ardent desires and persevering efforts for the cause of humanity and christian virtue, of human improvement and happiness.

Respectfully,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

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THE

APOSTLE PETER

A UNITARIAN.

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THE APOSTLE PETER A UNITARIAN.

BEFORE Peter became acquainted with our Saviour, he was a Jew. As such he had been born and educated. He must therefore have been a believer in the doctrine of the Divine Unity. He must have been a worshipper of One God in one person. This will be conceded by all who are conversant with the Jewish history, and whose opinion deserves respect. That Peter could have been a Trinitarian before his conversion to Christianity, is as improbable as that he could have been an atheist. If he ever afterward departed from this fundamental principle of the religion in which he had been brought up, we may reasonably expect to find some notices of so remarkable a change, in the copious accounts we have of his subsequent life. These accounts are contained in the Scriptures of the New Testament. We learn from them that, almost from the very commencement of our Lord's public ministry, to his ascension into heaven, Peter was his most talented and zealous disciple, and that subsequently, for the space of more than thirty years, he was one of the ablest and most successful advocates of the christian cause.

The question now presents itself— Have we any evidence that Peter, either while a pupil in the school of Christ, or at any time afterward in the course of his ministry, abandoned his old belief in the doctrine of the divine unity, and embraced Trinitarianism ? Have we not, on the contrary, the most satisfactory proof that he was, both as a disciple, and a teacher, a Unitarian ?

If it be assumed that he ever did abandon his old belief, in the respect we have mentioned, we ask, When ? Nor are we unreasonable in our demand. Certainly, an event so extraordinary, at least to his own mind, could not have been passed over in silence, nor even with a slight notice. If others saw fit not to record it, *he* assuredly would not have omitted to mention it. He must have dwelt upon it often and feelingly. He must have told us at what time, and under what circumstances, a change so fundamental, so opposed to his most deeply rooted prejudices, and so widely affecting the great system of religion, took place ; as he has done, with such minuteness of detail, concerning the far less important subject of admitting the Gentiles to christian privileges upon equal footing with the Jews. Now, we repeat the question, when did any such change, as we have described, take place ? We say, never. And we rest this assertion, in the first instance, on the silence of the Scriptures. We challenge any one to lay his finger on a single sentence, either from Peter himself, or from any other inspired man, which in its proper connexion affords the least particle of evidence, of his ever having embraced Trinitarianism after he had abandoned Judaism. We rest our assertion, in the second place, and chiefly, upon the positive proofs of his Unitarianism, derived from

his known declarations and conduct while a pupil of Christ; from the recorded instructions which he, in common with the other disciples, received during that period; from his public discourses, controversies, devotions, and private teachings, as given us by the sacred historian who reported the acts of the Apostles; and from his own writings that have come down to us.

1. We begin with his *declarations* and *conduct* while a pupil of Christ. Peter was, of all the disciples, the most likely, from his natural ardor and habitual forwardness, to object to whatever our Saviour might propose adapted to shock his prejudices. And so it was in fact. It was he who rebuked his master, when he first announced his future sufferings. But we need not cite particular instances. Our readers must be prepared, by what they recollect of Peter's character, for the question, whether it is credible, that one so prompt on all occasions to speak from the first impulse of feeling, could have heard Jesus, at any time, assert the existence of 'three persons in the Godhead, equal in substance, power and glory,' and not have expressed his surprise at what must have appeared to him, educated as he had been, so nearly approaching to polytheism? Especially, could he have refrained from expressions of astonishment, if, on any occasion, our Saviour in the character of the predicted Messiah — a character which no Jew ever dreamed would be properly Divine — had claimed to be Jehovah in the flesh, and the object of supreme religious adoration? Impossible! And the fact that no expressions of the kind we have been supposing, ever to our knowledge fell from the lips of this disciple, is one

proof that Jesus never inculcated the principles of Trinitarianism upon his followers. But much more than this. There are positive declarations of Peter on record, respecting our Lord's character, that can leave no doubt as to his opinions; declarations, which, connected as they are with the approving words of his master, afford the most convincing testimony that Christ did not claim to be, nor was considered by Peter, the supreme God.

We recur, for an example, to the sixteenth chapter of Matthew. To the question of Jesus to his disciples, —'Whom say ye that I am?'— Peter, with his characteristic promptness replied. In what terms? Precisely in such as any Unitarian would have used — 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And what said our Saviour to this? Did he intimate that he had received an imperfect answer? Did he insinuate that Peter, not having had access to the true source of light, was still in the dnrk as to his real character in this most important particular? Not at all; but bestowed on him the highest commendations, reminding him, at the same time, that such intelligence could have come only from God;—'Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jona; for flesh and blood have not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven.' And yet another time also, Peter made the same explicit and unhesitating confession. It was when Jesus said unto the twelve, 'Will ye also go away?' 'Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the *Son* of the living God.' Such is a specimen of Peter's declarations concerning the dignity of our Saviour's character. They were made on occasions,

when, if ever, he would have acknowledged his master's highest claims, and when Jesus, it must be supposed, would have corrected him, had he expressed inadequate views. Yet Peter, so far from calling him God, only professed his belief in him as the Christ, the Son of God, or, which is the same thing, the Messiah; and our Lord, instead of appearing dissatisfied with the profession, in one instance applauded it.

Nor is this all. Peter's known *conduct*, while conversant with his master, accorded with his declarations. He never betrayed the emotions, nor exhibited the manners, nor performed the acts of one, who believed himself in the immediate bodily presence of his Maker and his God. This is a strong point of the argument. Bring the subject home to your own bosoms, and imagine how a mortal man would feel and behave himself in such a presence; and having done this, carry your thoughts back to the time of Christ's ministry on earth, and observe how familiarly Peter lived with him; how he ate, and drank, and conversed with him; how he accompanied him whithersoever he went, now rebuking, and now commending him; at one time uttering the most solemn asseverations of attachment, and at another denying that he ever knew the man, — and then lay your hand upon your heart, and say, if you can, that Peter regarded Jesus as Jehovah.

2. And why should it be supposed by any that Peter ought to have so regarded his master? Whence could he derive the doctrine of the trinity? How was he to learn that the Messiah was God? It is conceded that he did not bring these notions with him from the synagogue; and we shall now show that he could not find

them in the school of Christ. The *instructions* that he received, in common with the other disciples, were invariably and strictly Unitarian. An example to the contrary is not upon record. We do not assert this unadvisedly. We have read the Gospels through with particular regard to this point; and we know that, in no instance did Jesus affirm that the Deity exists in three equal persons, or that he himself is God. On the contrary, we know that he repeatedly, and in the most unequivocal language, bore his testimony to the proper unity of the divine nature, and to his own inferiority to, and dependence upon the Father Almighty. Of what essential attribute of Deity did he not expressly and more than once disclaim the possession? Of underived and independent existence? He said, 'I live *by* the Father; as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himself.' Of almighty and underived power? These are his words, 'I can of mine own self do nothing; all power is *given* unto me.' Of omniscience? His language is this, 'As my Father hath *taught* me, I speak; of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels, neither the *Son*, but the Father only.' Was such teaching as this very well suited to make such a pupil as Peter a Trinitarian? You remember our Saviour's answer to one who applied to him the appellation 'good' in too high a sense;—'Why callest thou *me* good; there is none good but *one*, that is, God' Did Peter, constant as he had been in his attendance upon his master, know nothing of this? You remember too our Lord's reply to the Jews, who falsely accused him of making himself equal with God; 'The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.'

But why multiply texts? Who does not know that the teachings of Jesus abound in such passages? And where are any of a contrary import to be found? Read over his sermon on the mount, to which the disciples listened. Not a word of Trinitarianism appears there. Read his parables; nothing of such a doctrine appears in them. Listen to his devotions; all are addressed to the one God, the Father of all. Look at the directions he gave to his disciples as to the object of *their* devotions. Does he tell them to pay religious homage to him? O no; how different from this are his injunctions, even without a single exception. 'When ye pray, say, Our Father.' 'In that day ye shall ask me nothing.' 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he shall give it to you.' Witness his miracles. These, we are told, prove his supreme deity. Why then did he, before he bid Lazarus come forth from the grave, address this prayer to God, — 'Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me?' And why did he so often, as if purposely to multiply guards against that error of subsequent times which we are opposing, refer all his powers to the Father as the author of them?

Listen now to the language of his common discourses with his disciples. Does he not continually speak of himself as *sent* by the Father; as *coming* from the Father; as *anointed* of God; as *depending* upon God; as being *one with his disciples* as he was one with the Father? And can you believe still that Peter was taught to regard him as the supreme God? Without the least qualification, he said — 'My Father is greater than I.' Could Peter ever after believe and assert that God the Father was not greater than his master? Turn your

thoughts to the Saviour in the garden. Peter was one of his chosen companions. He, if any one, witnessed his agony, and heard his prayer; 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.' What words could this disciple have listened to more expressive of his master's consciousness that he was inferior to and dependent upon the Most High? Look again, and see him an unresisting prisoner, and now a bleeding victim on the cross. Hear his memorable words, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' 'Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.' Behold him bow his head and give up his breath. See him entombed. Are these demonstrations to the mind of Peter of his master's deity? Is it said that Peter was not a witness of these scenes? Be it so. We will look further. After the resurrection Jesus taught Unitarianism. 'Go to my *brethren*,' said he to Mary, 'and say unto them, I ascend to *my* Father and *your* Father, to *my* God and *your* God.' Ponder these words. Has God brethren? Has the eternal and self-existent a Father and a God, such as men have? Among the last words he addressed to Peter and the other disciples are these; 'Behold I will send you the promise of my Father.' 'As the Father hath sent *me*, even so send I you.' All power is *given* unto me.' But why prolong the discussion? Such, as we have seen, was the course of education through which Peter passed, under the immediate direction of Jesus Christ. It was not varied, in respect to the doctrines in dispute, that we know of, up to the moment of our Saviour's ascension into heaven. How, then, stands the case? From all we can learn of Peter's

declarations, conduct, and education, while a pupil of Christ, we are compelled to believe that he was a Unitarian at the period of his history, at which we have now arrived.

But new revelations are to be made to him, it may be said. Our Saviour, just before his death, promised to the disciples further illumination, by which they would be led 'into all truth.' Who knows, it may be asked, but Peter, Unitarian as he doubtless was at that time, may yet see cause to change his opinions and become a teacher of Trinitarianism? In reply to this, we will not stop to show the intrinsic improbability of such an event; but proceed to ascertain how the matter stands in point of fact. The question is to be settled by recurring to the records we have of his preaching, controversies, private teaching, devotions, and writings. That we may not be accused of taking a partial view of the evidence in the case, we shall adduce all of it that relates to the subject.

3. What then do we learn from the Apostle's *preaching?* His first sermon occurs in the second chapter of the Acts. He delivered it, we are told, immediately after the special illumination of the holy spirit. Does it contain anything like Trinitarianism? Not a syllable. It is thoroughly Unitarian from beginning to end. The points of doctrine it presents are these. 1. The divine mission of Jesus Christ. 'Jesus of Nazareth, a man *approved of God* among you;' or, as it should be rendered, 'proved unto you to be a man from God.' 2. The evidence of the divinity of his mission. 'By miracles and wonders and signs, which *God did by him* in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.'

3. His death, and how the event stood connected with divine providence and human agency. '*Him*, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of *God*, *ye* have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and *slain*.' 4. His resurrection, together with the author and proofs of it. 'Whom *God hath raised* up, having loosed the pains of death; . . . . . this Jesus hath *God* raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.'

His exaltation, and to whom he was indebted for it. 'By the right hand of *God exalted*.' 6. His possession of the promise of the holy spirit, dispensed through him to the first Christians, and how he came by it. 'Having *received* of the *Father* the promise of the holy ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.' 7. His offices, not underived, but conferred by the Most High. 'Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that *God hath made* that same Jesus both Lord and Christ.'

Of this character are the doctrinal parts of Peter's first sermon. It contains not a word, as to the point in question, different from what we have quoted. Who does not see that it is Unitarian in every particular? Could one be delivered more directly opposed to Trinitarian views? And yet, free as the Apostle's preaching was from what are so much vaunted, in our day, as the 'doctrines of grace,' it was not without the most salutary effects. When the people heard it, 'they were pricked in their heart,' and said, 'what shall we do?' And now we have a specimen of Peter's practical directions. Do they savor of modern Orthodoxy? Does he tell them to worship the trinity, to mourn over native and entire depravity, to confess they can do no-

thing themselves, to hope for a transfer of the penalty of their guilt to a substituted victim, or to calculate on having their moral deficiencies supplied by the imputed righteousness of Christ? As far from it as possible. He says to them, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.' '*Save yourselves* from this untoward generation.' So taught the most able and zealous of our Lord's ministers. We have too much respect for the understandings of our readers to aid a single word by way of comment.

But it will be asked, perhaps, whether Peter always preached so much in the manner of a Unitarian? We will see. Another opportunity offers itself for listening to him. We find him in Solomon's porch, surrounded by a multitude, that had been drawn together by the miraculous cure he had just wrought of a lame man. (Acts iii.) He prepares to address the people. Will he, who but a little time before preached Unitarianism with such success, now adopt an entirely new course, and unfold an opposite faith? Let the recorded facts decide. The very first statement he makes involves the doctrine of God's supremacy and the inferiority of Christ. 'The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus.' Is this Trinitarianism? Is the Son of God the very God whose son he is? Is he who is glorified the same with him who confers the glory? Peter proceeds. 'Ye denied the holy one and the just, and killed the prince of life; whom God raised from the dead.' Is it Jehovah that the Apostle accuses the Jews of denying and killing? Is it Jehovah that he says God raised

from the dead ? The inspired preacher goes on. 'Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me.' This Peter applies to Christ. Look at its import. 'A prophet like unto Moses,' — 'of their brethren,' — 'raised up by God !' Is this Trinitarianism ? The Apostle concludes his discourse in these words. 'Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.' Here, again, Trinitarianism is not only not recognised, but opposed. Jesus is represented simply as the *son*, the *sent* of God, while the supremacy of the Father is maintained, as it is uniformly in the teachings of this distinguished minister of the gospel.

Such as we have seen was the character of Peter's preaching. We do not believe he ever uttered a word in his public instructions, inconsistent with what we have now given. Not a single expression occurs in any of his sermons that have been reported, which can by any just rules of interpretation, be made to yield support to the doctrine of the trinity. And what was the efficacy of the sort of preaching we have been considering ? Was it impotent, as some are so fond of representing Unitarianism to be ? Three thousand souls were converted to the christian faith by Peter's first sermon, and five thousand by the second !

4. Let us now regard Peter in another character than that of a preacher. He was called to perform the part of a *controvertist*. Who were his first antagonists ? His countrymen, the Jews. Now consider, first, that they were exceedingly tenacious and sensitive as to their favorite doctrine of the Divine Unity ; and, se-

condly, that it was alike their wish and their practice to seize on every plausible ground of objection to the advocates of Christianity. From these facts, what was to have been expected, on the supposition that Peter was a Trinitarian and did not conceal his opinions? Why, certainly, that he would have been opposed on this ground, by the Jews; that he would have been drawn into a controversy as to the question whether God were three persons or one; and that some traces of such a controversy would have been left on record, after the manner of his other disputes with his countrymen. But how stands the case in reality? The New Testament does not afford us the slightest hint that any such question was agitated. We therefore say that he could not have been openly a Trinitarian. So much in the way of negative proof that Peter continued to be a believer in Unitarianism.

Something more than this, however, we are able to derive from the Apostle's known conduct as a controvertist. In his discussions with the Jews on other subjects he let fall divers incidental remarks, which yield us positive evidence that he was as far as possible from being a Trinitarian. The first example we have of his controversial manner, occurs in the fourth chapter of the Acts. The chiefs of the nation 'being grieved,' as the historian expresses it, that the Apostles 'taught the people'—what? Trinitarianism? nothing like it; but 'through Jesus Christ the resurrection from the dead.' So, as we are told, they 'set them in the midst, and asked by what power or by what name they had done this? Then Peter, filled with the holy ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, . .

be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye *crucified*, whom God *raised* from the *dead*, even by him,' &c. Remark this language. 'Jesus of Nazareth whom ye crucified.' Would a Trinitarian have said this, and no more? If Peter believed Christ to be Jehovah, why did he not embrace an opportunity like this for declaring his conviction? 'Whom God raised from the dead.' How could the Apostle have used these words, without any others by way of qualification or explanation, if he had not meant to leave on the minds of his auditors the impression of Christ's inferiority to, and dependence on, the Father Almighty?

Are we asked for another instance of Peter's controversial manner? One offers itself in the fifth chapter. He had been brought before the Council and reprimanded by the chief priests for having 'filled Jerusalem with his doctrines,' contrary to their express injunctions. What was his reply? 'We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers *raised up* Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree. Him hath *God exalted* with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour.' How does this accord with Trinitarianism? Could God die? But Jesus was slain and hanged on a tree. He rose from the dead; but was it by his own inherent and independent power? No. It was by that of the one God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Could the Most High be exalted? and by whom? But Jesus was exalted by the right hand of God. Christ is a Prince and a Saviour; how did he come by such a distinction? Peter says that God bestowed it upon him.

Now what has the Trinitarian to say to these things?

Does he ask for other instances of the Apostle's controversies with the Jews? There are no others on record. Does he inquire, if we have not omitted some expressions in those we have cited, which favor the doctrine of the trinity? We answer, — Not a word. It was always on Unitarian ground that Peter defended Christianity against the Jews; and we may add, it is the only ground on which it can be defended, with success, against the attacks of their descendants. Does he take up the old objection of Athanasius, and say that Peter refrained from declaring his Trinitarianism openly to his countrymen, on account of their prejudices respecting the Divine Unity? We need not dwell on the inherent improbability of this; for we happen to be informed of the Apostle's mode of presenting the truths of Christianity to the Gentiles, whose prejudices, it is well known, were so far from being favorable to Unitarianism, that they were all on the side of Polytheism. We refer to his conference with Cornelius and his friends. It may be well to quote the language he used on this occasion, at length; not, however, so much to meet the objection just stated, — for it is too weak to require a formal refutation, — as to fulfil our purpose of giving a complete view of the Apostle's system of doctrine.

5. We have, then, as another source of proof that Peter continued a Unitarian, an account, in the tenth chapter of the Acts, of his *private teachings*. We are told in the first place that Cornelius, a devout heathen, had received an extraordinary direction from God to repair to Peter, in order to be instructed in the christian religion. We have then a statement of some special revelations made to the Apostle, for the purpose of qual-

ifying him for this new duty. Is the doctrine of the trinity a part of these revelations? We have not the least hint to this effect. We at length find Cornelius and his friends prepared for their interview with Peter, who immediately proceeds to instruct them in 'all things (these are his words,) that had been commanded him of God.' His whole discourse follows. 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace *by* Jesus Christ — (he is Lord of all) — [i. e. he is master of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews] — that word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how *God anointed* Jesus of Nazareth with the holy ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for *God* was *with* him. And we are all witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew, and hanged on a tree; him *God raised* up the third day and showed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did *eat and drink with him* after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it was he which was *ordained* of *God* to be the judge of quick and dead. To him gave all the prophets witness that through his name, whoever believeth in him, [whether Gentile or Jew] shall receive remission of sins.'

Such is the message which Peter had received from God to deliver to Cornelius. Its whole complexion is

Unitarian. Had the arguments that have since been urged in support of Trinitarianism, then been prevalent, they could not, it seems to us, have easily had a more complete refutation. Let our readers weigh these expressions. 'The word which *God sent by* Jesus Christ; how *God anointed* Jesus of Nazareth with the holy spirit and with power; for *God* was *with* him; whom they slew, him *God raised* up; it is he which is *ordained* of *God* to be the judge of quick and dead;'—let these expressions be impartially weighed, and then let any one say, if he can, that Peter was commissioned to teach, or that he did teach, Trinitarianism.

6. We have followed Peter as a public preacher of the gospel, as a religious controvertist among the Jews, and as a private instructer of Christianity to Cornelius and his Pagan friends. Let us now listen for a moment, in the next place, to his *devotions*. Do we hear him addressing his prayers to the trinity? Never. Does he pay religious homage to Jesus Christ? The instance is not recorded by the sacred historian. All his devotions, of which we have any account, were Unitarian. Take an example, which alone establishes the position that he was not a Trinitarian worshipper. It is given in the fourth chapter of the Acts. Peter and John had just been released from prison, and had related the circumstances of their confinement to their brethren. It was natural that, at such a season, they should unite in devout acknowledgments to their accustomed object of adoration. To whom were their devotions on this occasion offered, and in what terms? 'They lifted up their voice to *God*, with one accord, and said, Lord, *thou* art God, which hast made heaven

and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against *his* Christ. For of a truth against *thy* holy *child* Jesus, whom *thou* hast *anointed*, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever *thy* hand and *thy* council determined to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of *thy* holy *child* Jesus.' We examine this prayer in vain for any recognition of Trinitarian views. It is Jehovah *in one person*, the Creator of the world, that is addressed. 'Lord, *thou* art *God*, who hast made heaven and earth,' &c. Jesus Christ is represented as distinct from and subordinate to God. 'Against the Lord and against *his* Christ.' Our Saviour is spoken of as indebted to the Father for his appointment to the office he sustained. '*Thy* holy *child* Jesus, whom *thou* hast *anointed*.' The favorite notion of a 'compact between the Sacred Three,' so often referred to by Trinitarian writers, is excluded, and all is ascribed to the sole purpose and execution of the One Divine Being. 'To do whatsoever *thy* hand and *thy* council determined to be done.' Aid is supplicated; but of whom? The one God. 'And now, Lord, grant unto thy servants,' &c. Jesus Christ is mentioned in the petition for miraculous powers; but how? As the author of them? No. The request is made to

God ; and Jesus is spoken of only as instrumental and subordinate. 'Grant . . . . . that signs and wonders may be done *by* the name of *thy* holy *child* Jesus.' Further remark is unnecessary. If Peter could unite in a prayer of this character without being a Unitarian, no one's language, it seems to us, can be relied on as an adequate medium for the communication of thought.

7. It only remains to examine the *writings* of Peter. These are comprised in one or two epistles or letters, composed by him many years after the date of what we have learned respecting him from the Acts of the Apostles. As their purpose is chiefly practical, it cannot be expected that they will be found to contain much which bears directly on the point of the present discussion. So far, however, as they afford any testimony as to the divine nature, it is decidedly in favor of our position, that Peter's views of it were Unitarian. Is it objected that he says of Christ, 'to him be glory both now and forever?' (2 Peter iii. 18.) Be it remembered that this is the only instance of ascription of glory or praise to Jesus, in Peter's writings. And to what does it amount ? It is not said to have been the *highest* glory, such as we are required to ascribe to the Father of all ; and what Unitarian would refuse to give that praise to Christ which belongs to him in his subordinate capacity of a divinely constituted Mediator and Saviour? Is stress laid on the circumstance that Peter sometimes applies the term, *Lord*, to Christ ? It is enough to remark, in reply, that he quotes Sarah as calling Abraham, Lord, 1 Peter iii. 6 ; and that nothing is more common in the Scriptures, than to designate other beings than the Deity by the same title of respect. Is it asked if the epistles of Peter

do not contain some other support of Trinitarianism than what we have now referred to? We answer confidently, Not the least. On the contrary, we find scattered on their pages such expressions as the following, which go to disprove that doctrine. 'Blessed be the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' 1 Peter i. 3. 'If ye call on the *Father*,' &c, v. 17, not on Jesus Christ; which agrees with the words of our Saviour himself; 'In that day ye shall ask *me* nothing,' &c. 'Who *by* him [Christ] do believe in *God* that *raised* him from the dead, and *gave* him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.' v. 21. [Christ] 'a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but *chosen* of *God*.' ii. 4. 'Spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God *by* Jesus Christ.' v. 5. 'For Christ hath *suffered* . . . that he might bring us to God.' iii. 18. 'Who is gone into heaven, and is on the *right hand* of God.' v. 22. 'That *God* in *all* things may be glorified *through* Jesus Christ; to whom [God] be praise and dominion forever and ever.' iv. 11. 'The *God* of *all* grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory *by* Jesus Christ, make you perfect. To *Him* [God] be glory and dominion forever and ever. v. 10. 'He [Christ] *received* from *God the Father* honor and glory, when there came such a voice from the excellent glory, "This is *my beloved son*, in whom *I am well pleased*." ' 2 Pet. i. 17.

These are all the words and phrases, we believe, that can be found in the epistles of Peter, from which anything can be inferred as to his opinions concerning the great question at issue between us and Trinitarians.

Few, however, as they are, they afford abundant evidence to convince us that he was a Unitarian writer. It is remarkable how he uniformly distinguishes between Christ and God. The language he uses, when speaking of Jehovah, is strikingly different from that which he employs in reference to our Saviour. The former he calls 'Lord God,' 'Faithful Creator,' and the like; but never the latter. He says, 'God the Father,' but in no instance, God the Son. He speaks of the 'will of God,' as supreme; of 'a good conscience towards God,' &c; but refrains from such expressions respecting Christ. In a word, he seems, almost without exception, when making mention of our Saviour; to use language with that sort of caution, which we might imagine an intelligent and thorough Unitarian would employ, who was apprehensive that his writings were some time to be searched for Trinitarian proof-texts.

We conclude with a single remark. Let it be supposed that the Apostle Peter had said, even n a single instance, (what he has never done either expressly or impliedly,) that our Saviour was *a partaker of a* DIVINE NATURE, which he actually has affirmed of Christians in his second epistle, (2 Peter i. 4,) with what triumph would it not be now seized on by Trinitarians as an argument for the supreme divinity of Jesus Christ, incomparably stronger than what can be found for the support of that doctrine in all the productions that remain to us of this, or any other writer of the New Testament.

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ON

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SUBSTITUTES FOR RELIGION.

WITHOUT controversy it is the doctrine of the Scriptures that 'he that doeth righteousness is righteous.'* And it will hardly be controverted that by *righteousness* the sacred writers frequently mean not merely the performance of the duties of man to his fellow man. This word, in the Scriptures, has often a wider scope, and implies the discharge of all our duties :—those which we owe to ourselves, as prudence, temperance, fortitude, and moral purity in general of heart and of life ; all those which grow out of our relations to mankind ; and those of reverence, trust, submission, worship and obedience, which we owe to God. Righteousness, in the Scriptures, is often synonymous with virtue, in the broad and general sense in which that word is used by moralists of the present day ; and it means moral goodness. Moral goodness, or virtue, may be defined to be the doing or the suffering of the will of God, in the hope of his favor. Thus defined, virtue, or righteousness, embraces everything which it is the will of God that we should do, or bear, or abstain from doing, for the advancement and security of our own happiness, or for the benefit of others : for, in proportion as the good of the creature is promoted, in such proportion is the hon-

* James iii. 7.

or of the Creator and Governor heightened, and his favor secured.

It will be readily seen that this view of righteousness opens a wide field for the efforts of a righteous man. How much does he see before him, to exercise all his moral and physical powers, in order to acquire and maintain the character of a good man! How much must be done, that requires strenuous effort! How much must be abstained from, which involves the sacrifice of present ease and gratification! In regard to others, the equity, which is dictated by the laws of nature, must be observed at the expense of toils and watchings and privations. The positive institutions of civil society must be sustained, and its requirements answered, at the expense of something that would otherwise contribute to individual aggrandizement. The claims of the family — of child, father, mother — must be met, at the expense of carefulness and watchfulness, of self-denial and self-command. Institutions must be established and sustained for the support of good order and good morals, for the diffusion of knowledge, for the advancement of the useful and elegant arts, for the promotion of our country's welfare, of humanity and religion. The plea of the helpless and friendless, the cry of the widow and the orphan, the appeal of the destitute and those who have fallen into decay, must be heard: the tear of the broken-hearted must be observed and wiped away: the cloud that settles upon the dwelling of the disappointed, the bereaved, the desponding, must be dispelled by the light of sympathy and the voice of encouragement; and the way of the inexperienced and the doubtful must be pointed out, in the counsels of wisdom.

In regard to ourselves, the gratification to which appetite prompts, and which opportunity presents, must often be denied to appetite. The passion that would stimulate to evil must be suppressed, by an effort that is often painful. Our pride and vanity must be humbled, by a comparison of what our attainments are with what they ought to be. Truth must be told, at the sacrifice of a present advantage or profit. Sobriety must be observed, at the hazard of appearing singular; prudence, even in a laudable enterprise, consulted, at the risk of seeming backward in a good work; and that knowledge assiduously and laboriously sought, which throws light upon the path of our duty, and gives firmness and confidence to our step as we advance in it.

In regard to God, a prevailing and abiding sense of his presence, an adoring sentiment of his power and his purity, lofty conceptions of his wisdom and majesty, must be habitually cherished in our minds. It must become not merely our study, but our *delightful* study, to trace his benevolence in the works of nature, and in the course of his providence; and we must dwell, with a religious pleasure, upon those affecting evidences of his care of us, his condescension to our infirmities, and his compassion for us, in the ignorance and wretchedness of our race, which he has furnished to us in his holy word. We must remember our accountableness to him, and must *show* that we do not forget it. We must trust in his faithfulness, and submit ourselves to his disposal. We must find our happiness in magnifying him in our thoughts. And we must subdue all our desires, wishes, and purposes to a cheerful subservience to his will.

To do all this is to be righteous; for this is to do righteousness. To do this is to secure the divine favor, and that eternal happiness which is the evidence and the reward of the divine favor. To do this is to be religious, — to be good — to purify ourselves, in an humble measure, as God is pure, and to be righteous even as he is righteous.

But, all this, it may be said, is not easily done. It may be so said in truth. And it is granted that it is no very easy thing to be a very good man. We grant that many of these duties are of difficult performance; that many of these virtues and graces are not easily attained. We grant that there are obstacles to be surmounted in proving that we are righteous by doing righteousness. But whether there are not greater difficulties in being unrighteous, it must be left to the instructions of God's word and of his providence, to the observation of the attentive, to the testimony of conscience, and to the wretched experience of the wicked, to determine. We admit that the path of virtue is an uphill path ; but it is the only path which leads to that 'building of God not made with hands' in which the good man expects to rest from his toils ; for that house is 'in the heavens.' We admit that thus to watch, and toil, and sacrifice, and obey, is no easy thing. And, yet, we know no other certain way to 'glory, honor, and immortality,' than 'by a patient continuance in well doing.'

Yet in almost all ages of the world, there have been those who have looked for the rewards of righteousness, and have flattered themselves, or been flattered by others, into the belief that they shall ultimately secure those rewards, upon some more favorable conditions

than this painful *doing of righteousness*. There have been those who have earnestly coveted the crown, but have had no relish for the battle that must be fought for it, and who, rather than engage in the conflict in person, have chosen to rest their pretensions upon the services of some *substitute*.

1. One of the substitutes for practical goodness, on which we are apt to rest our hopes of justification and acceptance, is *good resolutions*. We look back upon the past, and admonished by conscience, we resolve that we will be better than we have been. We know that a resolution that we will do right is the first step towards doing right. We begin to take to ourselves the credit of having completed our journey, because we have succeeded so well in beginning it. Experience, indeed, soon convinces us that our resolution was too spiritless to overcome our love of ease, and too weak to resist the onset of temptation. And we indulge our ease or yield to temptation, till an accusing conscience again drives us into a resolution that the future shall not be like the past; and we make these good resolutions so sincerely, and repeat them so often, that we are ready to believe that they will be accepted as, at least, of some account. And it is true they are of *some* account. They are at the bottom of much, if not of all, that is great or good in the conduct of life; for we do little that is either good or great without having previously resolved that we will do it. But let us remember, that, although a foundation is indispensable to an edifice, yet a foundation may be laid and no superstructure ever raised upon it. To prepare the ground and collect materials is not to build. To resolve is not to do. To say 'I go,

sir,' yet not to go, is not to do the will of the father who said, 'son, go *work* today in my vineyard.' And the prodigal was embraced by his father, and clothed in the best robe, not because he had *resolved* to arise and go to his father, while, yet, he continued in the land of his degradation, and loitered among the scenes of his riot and wretchedness, but because he *did* arise, and *did come* to the abode of plenty and of parental love.

2. The second substitute for practical virtue, or righteousness, of which we shall take notice, is a zealous *profession* of religion. It has always been more easy to profess almost any virtue than to practise it. Friendship, generosity, patriotism are much more frequently, because much more easily, professed than proved. A real devotion to the cause of philanthropy, of truth, of liberty, is a thing which involves expensive efforts. But a profession of such devotion — which, with men, will sometimes answer the same end as the real virtue, — is made at no great expense of time, or comfort, or anything else that is valuable, unless it be of truth. The giving up of one's self to the service and the will of God is followed by labors, and attended by momentous responsibilities. But to make a parade of such devotion is no difficult matter with one who is satisfied with the reputation of a quality which he knows that he does not possess; or one who is so weak as to suppose that God seeth as man seeth, and that like man, he is liable to be deceived in judging of human character.

But, what saith the Lord to his prophet, in regard to this matter? 'Stand in the gate of the Lord's house and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of

the Lord, all ye of Judah that enter in at these gates and worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord are these. If ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless and the widow; — then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever.'* The profession, or the boast, of any man that he is the temple of the Lord, that his soul is the abiding place of the ever blessed spirit of God, is a vain profession, an empty boast, if he is polluted by the deeds, or cherishes the desires, in which that Divine Spirit has no pleasure, and with which he cannot be associated.

What says Jesus of the efficacy of these professions? 'Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out demons, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.'†

And yet are there not those who, by the importance which they attach to it, seem to think that a formal and technical *profession of religion* is the very essence of religion; that with it there is no danger, and without it no hope: that publicly assenting to some favorite formula of faith, or subscribing to certain articles, or covenanting with others to observe one particular rite of religion, is religion itself: and that the door of heaven, if opened at all for such as do not make this tech-

* Jer. vii. 1. 7. † Matt. vii. 23.

nical profession, is opened reluctantly for one who presents himself before it, even though he come bending under a weight of years spent in the offices of justice, humanity, and unostentatious piety.

Do not such persons consider, or do they not know, that, if there is no other evidence than such professions, that the holy and beneficent spirit of God dwells in their hearts, and animates them to a life of purity and beneficence, their professions might as well be spared? What does it prove that you belong to this or to that church; that you commune with Christians at this or that table; or that you are under the christian watch of this or that connexion? It proves that you have, within your reach, one or another *class of means* of becoming enlightened and virtuous. But it does not prove that those means are of any benefit to you, — that you have gained by them any valuable knowledge, that you are excited by them to any works of righteousness, or that you are restrained by them from any vicious indulgence. How fallacious, then, is any profession of religion, as a substitute for religion itself! How unsubstantial, as the basis of any hope of favor and of final acceptance with God!

3. The third substitute for religion, of which we shall take notice, is *the observance of the rites or ceremonies of religion.*

We do not mean to be understood as denouncing, or even disapproving religious ceremonies. We are far from wishing to banish these externals of piety. We know too well the infirmities of our nature to suppose, that even so spiritual a religion as Christianity can exist in the world, and be cherished by those who

most need it, and be spread among those who are now ignorant of its influence and its hopes, without something visible to attract attention, awaken the dormant powers, command a seriousness of manner, and inspire a religious awe suited to the religious services to which they are usually attached: Let these rites be such as Christians choose to adopt, in conformity to their own understanding of the instructions of their Lord, and such as, according to the measure of wisdom severally imparted to them, they may find calculated for their enjoyment and improvement; always remembering, however, how lamentably propense the world has ever been to mistake the shadow for the substance, and to rest satisfied with the forms of religion, to the neglect of its duties and its spirit.

How continually did this propensity discover itself among the Jews, even in the purest ages of their temple-worship! In the time of our Lord, how entirely had it overcome the more rational instructions of the old prophets of Israel, and perverted the judgment of the most sage and influential doctors of the law! The beautiful proportions of Religion, as she was moulded and animated by the Divinity, and set forth by those in whom his spirit had dwelt in ancient days, were buried under the voluminous drapery of the Jewish ritual; and her lifeless form received a blind homage long after the glowing spirit had left it.

'Wherefore' — says the intrepid Samuel to his warlike king, returning from the slaughter of a whole people — 'Wherefore didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?' 'And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea,

I *have* obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag, the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites: but the *people* took of the spoil, sheep, and oxen, and the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed' — for what?—' *to sacrifice unto Jehovah, thy God* in Gilgal.' 'And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.' In perfect harmony with this were the instructions of the bards of Israel in succeeding ages. 'To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? saith the Lord. When ye make many prayers I will not hear,'—why ?—' your hands are full of blood.'* 'To what purpose cometh there incense to me from Sheba, and the sweet-cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet to me.'† Not that sacrifices were in themselves wrong. Under certain regulations and conditions they were required. A refusal to offer them, under those regulations, would have been punished. But these sacrifices were required, not as an ultimate duty, but as an *inducement* to obedience still higher and more purely moral. They could never, and they will never, be accepted as a substitute for moral virtue.

In this particular the new covenant is in exact accordance with the old. The Prophet of Nazareth, confirms the doctrine of the venerable array of the prophets who had gone before him. 'Go ye and learn what this meaneth—I will have mercy and not sacrifice.' 'Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypo-

* Isai. i. 11 — 15. † Jer. vi. 20.

crites! for ye pay tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, — judgment, mercy, and faith.' Not that these ritual minutiæ were criminal; but they were merely ritual, and unimportant, when compared with moral obedience — with the doing of righteousness: for, 'these things ought ye to have done, yet not to have left the other undone.'

Of what avail did Jesus give those, who had worked iniquity to understand that it would be to them, when they should stand at last and knock at the door of light and joy, that they could then say 'we have eaten and drunk in thy presence?' It would avail them as much as the same plea will avail those, of the present day, who rest their hope of future salvation upon that rite, or upon any other, or upon all the rest, of the externals of religion.

In our day the sacrifices of bullocks and rams are not substituted for real righteousness. But are there not other sacrifices that are? — the sacrifice of time, assigned by the Giver of our time for the practical duties of life, — time, given up by day, which is claimed by duty for business, — and time, given up by night, which is required by nature for repose: — time given up, not so much to the subduing and controlling of the animal passions, as to the excitement of them; and rather to producing a fervid state of the moral feelings, than to giving those feelings a direction to the sober offices of domestic life, and to maintaining social order, and cultivating the sympathies of our nature and the charities of our religion, and directing them towards the wants, the woes, and the frailties of mankind? And if time, and health, and charity *are* thus sacrificed — though it

be done in religious meetings, and with all the formalities of religion, — when that sacrifice is not distinctly claimed by the Lord our God, what ground have we to suppose that they will be more acceptable to him than were the sheep and oxen of Saul, which were themselves the proofs of his disobedience?

4. There is another thing, upon which men have depended for the character and the rewards of the righteous, rather than upon the doing of righteousness, which is nearly related to that of which we have just spoken. It is *the diligent attending upon religious instruction.*

There are those with whom seizing every opportunity that presents itself, or that can be found, out of the usual course, to hear preaching, praying, and exhortations; and zealously engaging in the support of prayer-meetings, lectures, and conferences, makes up nearly the aggregate of righteousness; and who suppose that, in walking this round, they describe the circle of religious duties. These — like those silly women, whom the Apostle describes to Timothy, as being led captive by those who have the form of godliness but deny its power — are 'forever learning, yet never able to come to the knowledge of the truth' — the knowledge of this great truth, that it is not enough merely to *know* our duties, but that we must also *do* them. Those who form such opinions of the righteousness that shall save them, are like scholars who spend their years in learning a science which they never expect, and never intend, to apply to the purposes of practical life; or like one who thinks he shall become an expert artisan by only *hearing lectures* upon the mysteries of his art. We know that a man will never become a mechanic by listening

to discourses upon the lever, the wedge, and the screw He may learn the names of these powers, and may see what has been, and what may be done by them. He may learn the uses to which particular tools are to be applied: but, till he takes them into his own hand, and spends many a day and many a night with them, he will hardly save himself from hunger and nakedness by the use of them.

Those who are thus forever learning, must long since have learned, that we have high authority for saying 'not the *hearers* of the law are just before God, but the *doers* of the law shall be justified.' And let all such remember that it was a venerable servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, 'Be ye doers of, the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.'

5. Another thing upon which Christians have fallen as a substitute for the laborious doing of righteousness is, *the holding of correct speculative opinions in regard to the doctrines of religion.*

The investigation of truth is, indeed, among the noblest and most honorable employments of the human mind. It is a delightful, although it is often a laborious employment. And Truth, when pursued and seized by her ardent lover, is unquestionably fair, and is to be cherished and venerated by all who hope to mingle with the great and good. But she is to be thus cherished and venerated, not, principally, upon her own account, but because of her high and holy ministrations. She is excellent and valuable chiefly as the handmaid of goodness. She holds out her torch to guide the doubtful and timid steps of virtue, in the darkness of her earthly

way. She encourages her sinking heart by directing her eye to the glories of her heavenly home. She is the fair, the lovely attendant of virtue, but she must not be mistaken for virtue herself: for, 'Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.'

The most correct apprehension of the doctrines of the gospel *may* be found in the head, when, at the same time, there is literally nothing of the spirit of the gospel in the heart, and when the hands are equally strangers to the works of righteousness which the gospel requires as the condition of eternal life. Those doctrines have, indeed, their importance. Their value and influence, where anything can exert an influence, are incalculable. They are highly propitious to the production of pure desires, and of chastened and enduring affection. They are propitious to the formation of good resolutions and good habits. So is the sun, and so is the rain propitious and even indispensable to the growth of fruits, for the nourishment and refreshment of the body. But as the sun may shine, and the rains may fall upon lands that lie barren forever, so all the holy and blessed influences of truth may be exerted upon a heart so little alive to the loveliness of truth and goodness, as to be awakened by them to none of the glorious efforts of righteousness.

6. The last of the substitutes for practical, personal righteousness, of which we shall at present take notice, is one upon which the vanity of men, under the assumed name of humility, first, and very early, induced them

to fall. We mean *external privileges in regard to religion*, and especially the privilege of being related to some one of distinguished piety and faith, in having been descended from him, or taught by him.

So long ago as the appearance and preaching of John the Baptist, the doctrine had become popular among the Jews, and was especially inculcated by the Pharisees, that they were entitled to a place in the kingdom of heaven, in consideration of the great privilege they enjoyed as the children of Abraham. They maintained that all, who were of the circumcision, were beloved of God, who, when he made his covenant with Abraham, assured him with an oath, that no one, who bore the seal of that covenant, should ever descend into hell; — that the faith and righteousness of Abraham would be imputed to all his posterity; — and that they would be saved, even to the exclusion of all the rest of mankind, through the merits of the patriarchs, and particularly of Abraham, whatever might be their own moral conduct. Some carried this doctrine of substitution so far as to say not only that God would not, but that he *could* not shut them out of the Messiah's kingdom, provided they had a *knowledge* of God, although they continued in infidelity and disobedience.

This substitute for personal righteousness, though it showed rather an unkind aspect to such as were *not* thus privileged, was particularly flattering to those who had the good fortune to be descended from Abraham. It consulted their ease, and was especially accommodating to their exclusiveness as a nation, and to their passions as individuals. And besides, as we have already suggested, it savored of modesty in those who were

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disciples, — so long as they had refused to obey his instructions and to follow in his steps of light and beneficence? Better would it be for such, could they plead for admission on the ground that they had had no privileges, than on the ground that they had enjoyed and abused them. Better, could they say, Thou hast *not*, than Thou *hast* taught in our streets.

Yet, if this reasoning is conclusive, and if the delusiveness of such hopes is obvious in the case of the *Jews*, why shall we give greater credit to either of these pleas, when they are offered by Christians? And yet we hear Christians every day, professing to rest all their hopes of future acceptance and glory, not, indeed, upon the merits of Abraham, or his righteousness, but upon the merits and righteousness of Christ, a son of Abraham.

Let us not be considered as undervaluing the merits of Abraham or of Christ. The faith and obedience of the father of the faithful was indeed admirable, and highly honorable and salutary to him. And we are told that they were imputed to *him*, not to his posterity, as righteousness. The righteousness of Abraham was, moreover, beneficial to his posterity; for, in consideration of it, his children were made the depositaries of the divine oracles. They were enlightened in their duty, and had blessings accumulated upon them. Among the children of Jacob a light sprung up to enlighten the Gentiles: and they were, ultimately, so reclaimed from the ignorance and vices of polytheism, that, to the present day, every child of Abraham is a worshipper of the One True God, the God of Abraham. Here are temporal blessings, and moral light, and the *means* of

moral excellence bestowed upon the children, in consideration of the faith and virtue of the ancestor. But these things do not secure the divine favor to the children. They do not, necessarily, make the children better. They may, and if abused or misimproved, they *will* make them worse, and more worthy of the condemnation into which they will ultimately fall.

And yet, — in respect to the principle upon which the moral qualities of any one moral agent are made the ground of another's hope of justification — how do the faith, the righteousness, the merits of Christ differ from those of Abraham? The faith of Jesus, in respect to its loftiness and constancy, was indeed unparalleled. His obedience was perfect. But it was *his* obedience. He was perfectly righteous, for he fulfilled all righteousness. This was, to *him*, the basis of his eternal glory: for, inasmuch as he was obedient unto death, God highly exalted *him*, and gave him a name that is above any name. The righteousness of Christ, moreover, is beneficial to us, and to all who bear his name: for it has given us higher conceptions of goodness, and more powerful motives to virtue: — it has raised our ideas of the divine character, and of the point to which human virtue may attain. It has given new lustre to our hopes. It has confirmed the sanctions of conscience and of God's word. It has imparted to our minds more extensive and more certain knowledge of moral subjects, and has supplied us with more ample means of becoming wise and good, and of thus securing our eternal salvation. It is in ways like *these* that the righteousness of Christ has been beneficial to his disciples; and to us, as such, has opened the gates of heaven, and given us a

free access to glory and to God. But, still, the righteousness of Christ is not our righteousnes, nor will it ever be imputed to us as such. And so far from saving us, — if we abuse, or neglect to improve the unnumbered and incalculable benefits which he has conferred upon us, as inducements and facilities to our own personal and practical virtue, his righteousness and merits will embitter the cup of our condemnation, — however firmly we may have been persuaded to believe otherwise, — and will make it worse for us than if he had never been sent for our redemption. For why is it less absurd and less opposed to the general, the uniform principles of the divine government, to suppose that the merits of a prophet should be imputed to his disciples, than that the merits of a patriarch should be imputed to his posterity? — Why shall the plea 'We have Christ for our teacher,' stand on higher, or on any other ground than the plea 'We have Abraham for our father?' And, where has Jesus ever taught us or encouraged us to unlearn, what we have learned from the prophet, that 'the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him?' The righteousness of Abraham or Christ, — whatever other benefits it may confer upon the children of the one, or the disciples of the other, will never open the gates of eternal life to any one who shall have neglected or despised to be righteous himself.

By the attention which we have now paid to these several subjects, — good resolutions, — a profession of religion, by becoming connected with what is technically called the church, — the due observance of religious rites, — diligent attendance upon religious in-

struction, — the holding of just speculative opinions upon the subjects of religious doctrine, — and external privileges in regard to religion, — we may have become prepared to form a tolerably just estimate of their use and value. If we weigh them impartially, we shall probably agree that they all have a value, and that the importance of some of them is great. But, let us take them all for what they are — the means, — the helps — the instruments of righteousness, and not righteousness itself. They are all facilities furnished us to help us in becoming good, but they are not to be taken as substitutes for goodness. Am I the better, — is my neighbor the better — shall either of us be the happier for my good resolutions, when those resolutions have been no sooner made than broken — when they have been given to the winds in the very breath that uttered them? — Is my profession of religion either doing or bearing the will of God, in the hope of his favor, if, at the same time, it neither lightens the burden of my brother's cares, nor informs his mind, nor strengthens his confidence in God? Does my observance of the rites of religion satisfy his hunger, or clothe his naked children, or encourage them to make such efforts as shall enable them to provide for themselves the necessaries and comforts of life? Is it probable that I shall the more faithfully impart moral instruction to my family, my friends and associates, — that I shall more fully discharge the duties of domestic and social life, — and that I shall induce those to do so who are within the sphere of my influence, by devoting my days and my nights to an indiscriminate attendance upon religious instruction? Will my hoarding up the treasures of speculative truth enrich my

neighbor so long as I keep those treasures locked up in the secret-chambers of my own mind? Will the righteousness of patriarch or prophet, in whose steps I have not been careful to follow, bring to my heart the peace that springs from a consciousness of duty cheerfully discharged, or of follies lamented and forsaken?

No: — these are all false grounds of religious confidence. They neither make us, nor prove us to be, benefactors of mankind: and though they may all have a tendency to lead us to the doing of righteousness, not all of them together show that we are already righteous. No one of them, nor yet all of them united, can be regarded as ultimate duties. They do not imply, still less do they prove, that we do, or bear, or abstain from anything, in compliance with the will of God, and in the hope of his favor: and so long as they do not, they entitle no one to the character and the hopes of the righteous: for, saith the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, 'Let no man deceive you; *he that doeth righteousness is righteous.*'

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ON

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ON ZEAL.

The subject of our remarks in the following pages is Zeal. What is zeal? It is defined in the dictionaries to be a passionate ardor for any person or cause. It is generally understood to be that state of mind or feeling, which prompts the individual to great and persevering exertions in the promotion of some particular object or design.

It is a state of mind that may be acquired by every one; though for the most part it depends much upon the natural temperament of the individual. Some men are constitutionally ardent and zealous. They become totally absorbed in the most trifling, as well as the most important pursuits and purposes of life, and can hardly act at all without rushing into extremes. Others, on the contrary, are constitutionally cold and phlegmatic. Their feelings are rarely excited by the most stirring causes, and their spirits never kindle into the warmth and glow of enthusiasm. Most men, however, as we have already observed, are susceptible of strong excitement, and though they may for years move on in the even and tranquil tenor of their way, without any powerful bursts of passion, yet there are in them, generally

speaking, sleeping embers, which more or less easily may be fanned by circumstances into a consuming flame. Examples of this kind are not uncommon in history. In general, however, zeal is exhibited most frequently, and in its greatest excess, by men of naturally warm feelings and of lively imaginations. A zealous spirit may be cherished also and displayed in reference to almost any object or pursuit, however trifling and insignificant ; and may be cherished and displayed too, however unimportant the occasion, in a degree the most improper and extravagant. This last remark is made in order to remove some wrong impressions which are received, and to correct some errors which are embraced on this subject.

Our minds are apt to be unduly influenced by a great display of zeal in others, and where our preconceived opinions and prejudices are not too strongly in opposition, to be in some degree favorably disposed towards a cause supported with a great appearance of earnestness — sincerely and with feeling. Before entering upon a consideration of our subject, therefore, I would make a few preliminary observations by way of pointing out two important errors into which a great display of zeal is apt to lead the human mind.

The first error or danger is, that of judging of the *importance* of any object, pursuit or doctrine, by the degree of zeal exhibited in its support. The ardor with which mankind in general seek any particular end is, we all know, in proportion to the importance they attach to it ; and we are therefore naturally inclined to believe, that a subject or purpose exciting a great deal of zeal and feeling must be intrinsically interesting and momen-

tous. Thus we are led to judge of the importance of an object or doctrine by the zeal shown in its support. Take for example some doctrinal point in theology. Here is one, which for ages has at different intervals been a subject of discussion and dispute. Men have contended about it with all the warmth and ardor of which the heart is susceptible. Zeal even to persecution has been exhibited in its cause.

Now we are prone to think that a subject which has produced so much excitement, must be in its nature all important. We say that it is incredible, that men should contend for a doctrine of inferior consequence, and still more incredible, that they should contend for it with a zeal bordering upon passion and madness. And yet, all this is credible, and all this has in fact been done. In the history of the Church, you will find that men have contended earnestly, zealously, bitterly, even unto bloodshed, for doctrines which at the present day are universally acknowledged to have been trifling and insignificant. Thus in the sixth century, a controversy arose and was carried on with zeal and bitterness upon the question, 'Whether the bodies of the righteous after the resurrection would be solid, or thinner than air?' And in the thirteenth century it was debated with equal ardor at Constantinople, 'Whether at the communion the body of Christ was received incorruptible as it was after his resurrection, or corruptible as it was before?' 'This dispute was carried on,' says Jortin, 'not only by divines, but by the vulgar in the streets and in the markets.'

Thus we see, that the zeal with which an opinion or doctrine is discussed, is no evidence that the opinion discussed, or doctrine supported, is an important one.

Men may for a time believe it to be important ; but men sometimes attach importance to trifles, and then exhaust their zeal upon them. Yet they are but trifles after all. This then is one error, the error of believing an object or opinion to be necessarily *important*, on account of the zeal displayed in its support. The greatest, the most extravagant zeal has been often expended on subjects of the least importance.

Another error to be avoided is, that of being influenced in our judgments as to the *truth* of any doctrine or opinion, by the zeal with which it is defended.

We have already observed, that where our preconceived opinions and prejudices are not too strongly in opposition, the mind becomes favorably disposed towards a cause not obviously evil, that is supported with a great appearance of earnestness and sincerity. The truth is, the display of strong feeling in another excites, by the power of sympathy, strong feelings in ourselves ; and where there is no counteracting influence, these strong feelings in ourselves will be of the same character and in favor of the same object as those which excite him. The complacency of mind which we feel towards that sincerity of heart and honesty of intention, which zeal honorably exerted seems to evince, attaches to the cause itself in which this zeal is shown. Hence it happens, that the zeal with which opinions are supported, unless it be carried to absurdity or crime, predisposes the mind to their reception. We are in danger of being carried away by the enthusiasm of another's zeal. We are slow to believe that such great sincerity can be blended with error ; or that there can be so much depth of feeling without equal strength of conviction ;

or that there can be such strength of conviction unless it be based on truth. The consequence is, that error zealously supported, prevails over truth feebly supported. It is upon this principle and by this process of the mind, that so many absurd opinions have in every age prevailed, and to so strange an extent. Zeal alone has a proselyting influence, and the mind is thus predisposed to receive as truth, error earnestly and sincerely urged upon it, rather than truth itself, coldly, and feebly, and indifferently enforced.

Now we would warn our readers against this wrong impression which a great display of zeal leaves upon the mind. We would have them know and realize, that zeal is no evidence either of the justice of a cause or of the truth of a doctrine. A bad cause may be zealously supported; a good cause may be coldly and feebly maintained. And it is a fact, in respect to christian doctrines, and the history of the christian church will confirm it, that error has been defended and propagated with more zeal and enthusiasm than truth. Truth indeed has been left in general more to its own merits. Error has needed and received more, the aid of human zeal and exertion.

Look at the zeal with which the Gentiles of old defended their idols and opposed Christianity, persecuting the primitive Christians even to bonds, imprisonment and death. Yet their zeal was in support of error.

Look at the zeal with which Mohammed made converts to his faith, carrying fire and the sword against those who denied his divine authority. Yet his zeal was in support of error.

The zeal, then, with which a doctrine or an opinion is defended and propagated is no evidence of the *truth* of that doctrine or opinion. Men may be zealous in their *errors*. Men may be sincere in their errors. But then their zeal and sincerity are no proof that they are *not* in error.

When you are told of any particular doctrine, that a belief in it is *all important;* that it is a doctrine of great consequence, or there never would have been so much zeal exhibited in its propagation, let your answer be, that men may be and often have been zealous, extravagantly zealous, in one age in support of opinions, which in another age have been esteemed unprofitable or unimportant; that our zeal is in proportion to the importance we attach to any subject; and that men sometimes attach importance to trifles.

When you are told in evidence of the *truth* of any doctrine, that it is ardently supported, and to induce you to embrace it appeals are made to the greater zeal and interest which its friends display in its cause, let your answer be, that zeal is no evidence of truth; that the greatest errors have been propagated with the greatest zeal; and that Christianity itself never had exhibited in its defence a zeal more sincere or impetuous than that which has been exhibited in defence of idolatry and superstition.

I have dwelt longer than I at first intended upon those erroneous impressions which a great appearance of zeal has a tendency to make upon the mind. The importance of the subject must be my excuse. It surely is important, all important, that we be not under wrong influences in our reception of christian truth. The

great question in regard to any particular doctrine is, not who have embraced it, nor what degree of zeal has been shown in its propagation, — but whether it be contained in the sacred Scriptures, and what is the degree of importance there attached to it. Human authority cannot make that essential to salvation, which the Scriptures do not declare to be so. Human zeal cannot make that christian truth which is not founded upon Christ and the Apostles. However therefore we may admire a sincere, zealous spirit, let us never make it in any degree the test of the *importance* or of the *truth* of any doctrine or opinion.

Having made these preliminary observations we proceed to enter more particularly upon our subject, and to offer some remarks upon the nature, character, and proper objects of zeal.

1. In the first place, I would observe generally of this spirit, or state of mind, that there is nothing in it reprehensible. On the contrary, it is an object of approbation. We love to see men zealous. We augur well of those who enter with spirit upon their undertakings, and pursue them with ardor and perseverance. Zeal is essential to great attainments. Who are they that excel? Are they not those who devote themselves to their particular pursuits; and do we not often find it true of those who have been distinguished above others, that the love of that particular occupation, or art, or science in which they have excelled, has been an all absorbing passion of the soul? It is also through the influence of ardent feelings and by zealous exertions that great events are brought to pass, and important ends accomplished. Where difficulties and obstructions

lie in our path, what can insure success but a zeal that prompts to great endeavors — a spirit which, heedless of dangers and difficulties, presses forward boldly and vigorously and enthusiastically towards the accomplishment of its purposes? We cannot in fine but approve of a state of feeling to which we owe, in part, the establishment of our religion, and to which every age is in a measure indebted for its greatest improvements.

While we see nothing, however, in the general nature of zeal to condemn, but rather much to approve, yet let us realize that it is a disposition of mind that may be abused and perverted. Let us realize that every kind of zeal is not equally commendable. Our zeal may be founded in a bad spirit; it may be exerted in a bad cause; and even in a good cause it may become by its excess, injurious and reprehensible.

2. We observe, therefore, in the second place, that it is important that our zeal should be exerted under the influence of good motives, and with a pure spirit. The cause in which we may engage may be a just and righteous cause, and yet our zeal in its support may be founded in motives and exerted with a spirit positively bad. How often is the zeal of the politician, employing his time and expending his strength in promoting the interests of his country, kindled at the altar of personal and perhaps criminal ambition? How often, in times of strong excitement, does the ardor of the partisan, however just his cause, degenerate into a bitter spirit of personal resentment or private animosity and revenge? In religious disputes the zealot is prone to forget the cause itself, and is in danger of contending

more for victory than for truth. And of many in every age who have 'earnestly contended for the faith once delivered to the saints,' may it not be said that the spirit with which they have opposed their erring brethren, has partaken something of the character of the zeal of Saul of Tarsus, — 'being exceeding mad against them?'

We are to beware of a spirit like this. The zeal that is kindled and excited by it, is not a good zeal, though it may be exerted in a good cause. No, the zeal that cannot make due allowance for others' errors; that does not reflect upon the various causes of honest diversity of sentiment; the zeal that sinks into feelings of hostility, and degenerates into a spirit of bitterness and hatred and exclusiveness, is at best but an unenlightened, a blind, and an unhallowed zeal. Christianity asks not its aid. Religion declines its support. It is a zeal that brings only reproach and disgrace upon a cause. Truth withers beneath its influence, and the ban of earth and of heaven is upon it.

3. In the third place it may be observed, that in order to be justifiable, our zeal should be exerted only in the promotion of just ends, or in the words of an Apostle — 'it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.' 'A *good* thing,' — this is the indispensable requisite of a righteous zeal. Through inattention to this, how much evil has been produced! How much sin committed! Look at the progress of unholy ambition; first proposing to itself objects beyond lawful attainment, and then seeking them with a zeal that sacrifices every honorable principle and generous feeling, in their pursuit. Look at the progress of sensuali-

ty; first proposing to itself criminal enjoyments, and then devoting itself to indulgence, to sinful gratification, at the expense of principle, reputation, health, and even life itself. Look too at the history of human opinions, and see how often errors heedlessly embraced, have been defended and propagated, with an ardor worthy a better cause. If half the zeal which has been expended in the promotion of error and of evil, had been exerted in the establishment of truth and virtue, the world, in comparison with its present state, would be a paradise of innocence and happiness.

Be zealous, then, only and always in a good thing. Propose good ends to yourselves — proper objects of pursuit. Never let your zeal, either in civil or religious matters, degenerate into a sectarian, a party zeal, that blinds the judgment, and calls good evil and evil good. But let it be a zeal exerted in the promotion of truth and virtue, and for the best interests of the church and state; for the glory of God, and the happiness of man.

4. I remark in the fourth place, that in order to be approved by reason and religion, our zeal must confine itself, in the promotion of its ends, to the use of proper and lawful means. This is particularly necessary in regard to the dissemination of truth — moral, religious, christian truth. No matter indeed what be the nature of the truths you wish to establish; the zeal that would propagate them by violence and oppression, is an unjustifiable and reprehensible zeal — a zeal not according to knowledge. And yet how often have these means been used, in support of truth and in opposition to it! How often has the human mind, in its progress, had to

contend not only against the sophistry of error and ignorance, but also against that spirit of persecution which would bend the mind to its will by the tortures it inflicts upon the body! The history of literature, of the arts and sciences, furnishes many an illustration of the truth of this remark.

It has been the same in respect to the progress and establishment of christian truth. In what manner was the preaching of the Saviour opposed? By the arm of civil power and authority. In what manner was the preaching of the Apostles opposed? By the arm of civil power and authority. Men endeavored to put down, to destroy the christian religion by violence and oppression. They nailed the Saviour to the cross; they persecuted his disciples from city to city; and the chief arguments which the Jew and the Gentile brought against the reasonings of the Apostles were — fetters, imprisonment, and death. It were well if we could stop here. But truth compels us to add, that Christians have in their turn employed the same unholy weapons that they condemned in the hands of their adversaries; and that in opposition to its express command and to the mild and gentle and persuasive spirit of Christianity, its followers no sooner acquired power, than they abused it, by a zeal that kindled the fagot and spread its faith by the terrors of the Inquisition. In some periods of the christian church the sentiment has been adopted both in theory and in practice, that the end justifies the means; a sentiment abominable in principle, and unchristian and pernicious in its tendency and consequences.

While you esteem it therefore good to be zealously affected in a good thing, never let your zeal even in a good thing, induce you to resort to unjustifiable means in promoting it. However just the cause, or correct the opinion, or important the truth you would support, promote it, defend it, by means fair and honorable and upright, such as become an honest man and a Christian. Be above all low and unworthy arts ; disdain all ungenerous advantage. All imputation to others of doctrines not embraced by them ; all misstatement of doctrines actually entertained, in order to bring disrepute upon a fellow creature ; all infliction of physical force, such as stripes, imprisonment and pain of any kind, and death, in order to influence opinion, may be placed among means unjustifiable and improper. The zeal that uses them is the zeal of the bigot ; an unholy, unrighteous zeal, which neither reason nor religion sanctions.

Force may make men hypocrites. Fear may bend the knee before the altar of superstition. But force cannot influence the judgment. It can never make the mind believe that the idol of stone and of wood is the only true and living God. No ; Christianity approves not a zeal like this. Argument, persuasion, the influence of mind upon mind, are the only means, which christian truth would use in its establishment ; and christian zeal will never suffer itself to be hurried beyond them.

5. In the fifth place, our zeal should always be in proportion, and only in proportion, to the importance of the subject or end that excites it. As it respects chris-

tian truth, for example, it must be conceded that all the doctrines and precepts of Christianity are not equally important. We believe its practical principles and doctrines to be more important than those which are merely speculative and theoretical; and those truths which are clearly revealed and universally acknowledged and received, to be more essential than disputed points of theology. Now it is absurd and preposterous to feel or exhibit the same degree of zeal in support of the minor as of the more important articles of religious faith. And herein I think we of this day and generation are most prone to err, and do err. Men contend more earnestly for disputed doctrines of Christianity, than for the truth of Christianity itself. They are more zealous in the dissemination of sectarian views of religion, than of the christian spirit. They show more zeal in the propagation of dark, mysterious, obscurely revealed doctrines, than of the plain, practical precepts of Christianity.

Is not this, let me ask, at variance with religion and common sense? Our zeal should be in proportion to the importance of the subject or end that excites it; and certainly it is more important to defend the divine authority of our religion, than any particular truth it reveals. It is more important to possess and spread the christian temper and spirit, than any sectarian dogma. It is more important to receive, observe and propagate the plain, practical precepts and principles of the gospel, than to enforce doubtful and incomprehensible doctrines. Here then let our greatest zeal show itself; not in speculative controversy; not in unprofitable questions; but in promoting the spread of Christianity and of its

simplest and plainest, and therefore most important truths ; in imbibing and disseminating its spirit ; and in practising ourselves, and promoting in others, the practice of its precepts and virtues.

6. In the last place, our zeal should never be carried to excess and extravagance.

But it is asked, can there be too much zeal in a good thing ? Can we, for example, be too zealous in the cause of religion ? in the cause of piety ? in the cause of God? It is thus that fanaticism in every age has replied to the remonstrances of reason and common sense, and attempted to silence the voice of those who would not rush to the same excess with itself. Such is the language of the self-denying hermit, as, retiring from the busy scenes of active life, he devotes himself to solitary meditation, and amidst the wilds of savage nature gives vent in inward reveries or in extravagant ecstasies to those feelings which had better be indulged and exercised in the social state to which they are adapted. Such is the language of the cowled monk, as he counts his beads in his narrow cell, or observes within the walls of his cloister his accustomed penance, thinking to expiate the sins of the soul by the stripes he inflicts upon the body. Such too was the language of those multitudes, who at the most prodigal expense of life, wrenched of old the holy city from the grasp of the infidels, and approached the sepulchre of the Saviour with hands reeking with the blood of those whom that Saviour had taught them to consider as brethren. And who does not perceive that this is language which may be used in justification of a fanatical zeal, in the promotion of any religious error ? The truth is, the language is

vague and indefinite ; and it is this very want of definiteness which gives to the inquiry its intended effect, and deters many from discountenancing immoderate zeal when associated even with religious error, by exciting within them the fear of injuring, by their condemnation of an erroneous zeal, the cause of religion itself.

When we are asked, therefore, whether we can be too zealous in the cause of religion, the question arises, What is here meant by religion ? If by religion be meant any and every error that goes under the name of religion, we answer, Yes. Who will not acknowledge, that many a heresy of the fourth century was supported with a zeal absurdly extravagant ? If by religion be meant outward rite and ceremony, we answer, Yes. They who in their observance of religious forms and attendance upon religious meetings and ordinances, neglect their necessary worldly occupations, incur debts they are unable to pay, impoverish their families and bring upon them want and wretchedness, are unquestionably exposed to the charge of possessing an unjustifiable zeal ; for in their attention to forms they become neglectful of their social and moral obligations. But this is not religion. Religion is not superstition. Religion is not mere rite and ceremony. Religion consists in doing the will of God, as that will has reference to thought, feeling and action. And what is the will of God ? It is acting in conformity to the intellectual, social, moral and religious nature he has given us. It is, that we attach to every duty that importance which belongs to it. It is, that every virtue be practised within its proper bounds and to its fullest extent. It is, that we study

symmetry and proportion in our moral and religious attainments, and preserve what may be termed a perfect balance of character. Now if a man be religious in this sense of the word religion, there is no danger of excess. The more truly religious he becomes, the more perfectly will all the powers and principles and feelings of his nature be balanced within him, and of course the farther removed will he be from all extravagance.

But multitudes do not view religion in this light, and the consequence is that religion too often becomes with them mere animal feeling, and degenerates into an over heated zeal — into fanaticism. The cause of truth, the cause of religion, and of the christian religion too, has suffered much from the wild enthusiasm of some of its followers. Everything therefore which has a tendency to produce excess in regard to our religious feelings should be avoided. We should carefully shun those occasions, societies, and places, in which we shall be exposed to the danger of having our minds unduly biassed, our judgments perverted by the influence of the passions, and of being led by our sympathies to the reception of erroneous views of duty, or to the extravagant display of religious fervor. Not that I would exclude the affections from our religious services. Oh no. Give to God as much of the heart as you will. Give him your warmest affections; but let them be the healthy effusions of natural feeling, not the diseased and morbid sensibilities of unnatural excitement. Religion is a reasonable principle. The service of God is declared to be a reasonable service; and the zeal we feel and exhibit in his cause should be restrained and governed by reason. The moment

it throws off the controlling influence of reason, and becomes mere passion, it is impossible to predict into what extremes of folly, into what depths of crime it may rush. Let our zeal then be a rational, an enlightened zeal — a zeal according to knowledge. For let us remember that our zeal is a good or an evil, a blessing or a curse, to ourselves and to society, as it partakes or not, of the spirit and character which we have pointed out.

The zeal of Saul the persecutor was the zeal of a bigot—an unholy, an unsanctified zeal; like the besom of destruction, sweeping away everything in its course; like the breath of the sirocco, scorching and consuming everything over which it passes. The zeal of Paul the Apostle was a hallowed and purifying zeal; a zeal active and fervent indeed, but rational, moral, diffusing like the sun a vivifying light and heat around; — like the early and the latter rain, bringing life and refreshment to the soul of man.

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OUTLINE

OF THE

TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE

AGAINST THE TRINITY.

BY HENRY WARE, JR.

SECOND EDITION.

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TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE, &c.

WHY do we not believe the doctrine of the Trinity? Because it is not the doctrine of the Bible.

This is our reason. Not because the doctrine is a *mystery* — that is, if you mean by mystery something which we cannot fully understand or explain. This circumstance may create a difficulty in many minds; but notwithstanding this, if we found it testified to in Scripture, as an unquestionable and essential doctrine, we should not hesitate to believe it, any more than we hesitate to believe that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, or that God foreknows all things, and that yet man is a free agent. We only ask for PROOF that it is taught in the Bible. We have looked for it, and do not find it. *We do find that God is revealed to be* ONE, *but we do not find that he is revealed to be* THREE — neither three 'persons,' nor three 'subsistences,' nor three 'distinctions,' nor three 'somewhats;' for each of these words has been used to explain the doctrine. Therefore we cannot believe it.

That God is revealed to be One, is a proposition which I need not stop to prove; for no one denies it. It would be consuming time to no purpose to quote passages in support of it.

I therefore pass to the other proposition — *We do not find in Scripture that God is revealed to be Three.* This is the doctrine opposed to our faith, and which it is necessary for us, in upholding the truth of the Bible, distinctly to disprove. In doing this, we make our appeal to the Bible; and may He, who blessed man with that precious volume, aid us in so unfolding its testimony, that we may 'speak concerning Him *the thing which is right.*'

We refer principally, in this brief outline, to the testimony of the New Testament. If it appear that this is decidedly against the doctrine, it is enough. No one will pretend to prove it from the Old Testament alone. If Jesus and the Apostles deny it, no one will think that Moses and the Prophets assert it.

I. *The terms which are necessary to the very statement of the doctrine, and which cannot well be avoided by those who hold it, are not found in Scripture.* The words Trinity — triune — Jehovah-Jesus — God-man — are not in the Scriptures. We nowhere find the expression *God the Son*, but always the *Son of God;* nowhere *God the Holy Spirit*, but the *spirit of God*, or *the Holy Spirit* The expressions first person, second person, third person, three persons, are not found. Now if the very words, which are necessary to express the doctrine, are not in the Scriptures, how can we suppose the doctrine itself to be there? If the sacred writers meant to teach this doctrine, how is it possible they should not sometimes have used the words which are now used in regard to it?

II. *The doctrine of the Trinity is nowhere stated in express terms, while that of the sole divinity of the Father is taught in language the most explicit and direct.*

There are only three texts which speak of the Father, Son and Spirit in formal connexion, and neither of these declares them to be three equal persons in the Divinity. Now is it possible this should be the case if the doctrine were true? Is it possible that the Apostles should never name them together but three times, and then not speak of their being one God?

Indeed I am wrong to say that there are *three* texts; there are only *two;* for one of the three passages to which I referred is well known to be no part of the Bible; — viz. 1 John, v. 7. *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.* This verse, every body knows, was not written by St. John, but has been added to this epistle since his day. John wrote in Greek; but the old manuscripts of the Greek Testament do not contain it. It is found only in the Latin. It has therefore no right to a place in the New Testament, and ought to be rejected. It *is* rejected by all impartial scholars of every denomination, who have inquired concerning it. There are therefore only two texts which formally name the Father, Son, and Spirit in connexion with each other.

The first is the form of Baptism, Matthew, xxviii. 19. *Baptising them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Here the three are placed in connexion. But observe the mode of expression. Does it say that they are three persons? No, it does not say that they are persons at all. — Does it assert that they constitute one God? No. Does it say that each is

God? No such thing. Does it say that they are all equal? No such thing. Does it say they are all to be worshipped? No. *Then it does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity.* If it neither declares them to be three persons, nor equal to each other, nor each to be God, nor each to be worshipped, then it does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity.

The same is true of the other text, 2 Corinthians, xiii. 14. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.* It is not here said that each is God, nor that all are equal, nor that all are to be worshipped, nor that all together constitute one. Therefore it does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity. Nay, it virtually denies it. For, as you observe, it does not speak of the *Father, Son* and Spirit, but of *Jesus Christ* and *God* and the Holy Spirit. Observe the difference, and consider what it implies. Would a Trinitarian express himself in these words and in this order, when intending to express his doctrine? If it were *Father, Son* and Spirit, we should of course regard them as three and not one, unless expressly instructed to the contrary; how much more when the words run, *Jesus Christ* — and *God* — and the Holy Spirit. So that there is only one text which unites the term Father, Son and Spirit, and that one says nothing of the doctrine of the Trinity. Now I ask seriously, if it had been intended to teach that doctrine, is it possible that this should be the case?

It is thus plain that this doctrine is nowhere taught in express terms. You then say, it is perhaps taught indirectly and by necessary implication. I answer, it is impossible this should be, because the doctrine that

THE FATHER ALONE IS GOD is taught in *the most direct and absolute terms that language will admit;* so as positively to put out of the question every other doctrine, and to take away the liberty of inferring any other from indirect expressions.

That this is so, may be seen at once from a few plain and explicit texts, which seem to be perfectly decisive.

(1.) John, xvii. 3. *This life is eternal, that they might know* THEE, THE ONLY TRUE GOD — *and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* This is the language of our Lord himself in prayer. Now that he was *at prayer* proves that he could not be God — for God never prays. But besides this, he strongly asserts that the Father *only* is God. It could not be asserted more strongly. It *never has been* asserted more strongly.

(2.) Mark, xiii. 32. *But of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven;* NEITHER THE SON; *but the Father.* This is the language of our Lord. He declares that he does not know the time of that day and hour; that the Father only knows it. Therefore the Father only can be God; for God knows all things.

(3.) 1 Timothy, ii. 5. *There is one God — and, one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* What can assert more positively than this, that Jesus is not the one God? If not, then there is no Trinity.

(4.) 1 Corinthians, viii. 6. *But to us there is but* ONE GOD THE FATHER, *of whom are all things and we in Him; and* ONE LORD, *Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by him.* This text is very positive. It declares that Jesus is our Lord; but that the Father only is our God. Can language be devised which shall declare it more positively?

(5) Ephesians, iv. 5, 6. ONE LORD, *one faith, one baptism,* ONE GOD AND FATHER *of all, who is above all and through all, and in you all.* What can the Apostle mean by this separation of our Lord from the one God and Father of all, if it do not intimate the Father's complete and unrivalled supremacy? What words can speak it, if such words as these mean anything else? Has it ever been asserted, by any Unitarian, more unequivocally?

I ask then, seriously — in the fear and presence of Almighty God, and in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord — whether these five POSITIVE EXPLICIT assertions that the Father only is God, ought not to set the question at rest in our minds? While we have these plain and intelligible declarations of the divine word — which never have been, and never can be, made consistent with the doctrine of three equal persons in the Godhead — ought we to be turned from our faith by any arguments which might be drawn from more obscure passages? Ought we to take up the opposite doctrine, because it may be ingeniously inferred from difficult and controverted texts? Are we not bound by these plain declarations? And while they stand in our bibles, uncontroverted and unrefuted, shall it be said that we reject the testimony of God, and depart from the oracles of truth? For myself, so long as the glorious doctrine of the Divine Unity is built upon these FIVE SACRED PILLARS, I must confide in it as the truth of God. If the Holy Oracle can announce any truth plainly and unequivocally, it has so announced this. To my ear it speaks in language the most unambiguous and the least susceptible of perversion. While I abide by it in these

plain texts, I know what I believe; I have the sure word of truth. If I forsake these, and attempt to reason out another doctrine from more difficult passages, I am not sure that my reason may not deceive me in the process, and lead me to wrong conclusions. I am safer therefore to abide by the testimony inscribed on these Five Pillars, which I can read as I run.

III. As these fundamental texts most plainly teach the supremacy of the Father, so there are *equally decisive texts respecting the character and offices of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit*, which go to coufirm it. Let us attend to these.

1. Let us consider, first, *the language which is commonly used respecting our Lord Jesus.* Is it such as implies that he is the same with Almighty God? Take his testimony respecting himself. — 'I came not to do mine own will.' — 'I can of myself do nothing.' — 'The Son can do nothing of himself.' — 'The Father that is in me, he doeth the works.' — He calls himself, 'he whom the Father hath sanctified and sent.' — He says, 'I am come in my Father's name.' And after his resurrection he says, 'I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.' — Ponder these expressions; weigh these words; and say whether they be the words of one who would represent himself as the independent God.

Take the testimony of the Apostles. 'Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, by signs and wonders which God did by him.' — 'Appointed to be a Prince and Saviour' — 'at the right hand of God exalted' — 'made both Lord and Christ.' Because of his

obedience unto death, 'God hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name.' In the end he shall 'deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.' Weigh these expressions deliberately, and consider whether it be possible that they should be used concerning Almighty God. Yet such as these are applied to Jesus in every part of the New Testament.

Consider the terms of faith in him which were required of his disciples. Were they such as implied his supreme divinity? Remember the confession of Peter —'Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God;' — and with this Jesus was satisfied. Remember the confession of Martha — 'I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God;' — and he required no more. Remember the reason which John gives for writing his Gospel; 'These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.' Who does John say is born of God? 'Whoso believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.' Who does he say overcomes the world? 'He that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God.' What was the preaching of the Apostles? Look through the book of Acts, and you will find the burden of it to be, 'Reasoning from the Scriptures and testifying, that Jesus is the Christ.' Now is it possible, that, in all which is thus said of the necessity and value of faith in Jesus, — when believers were to be received into the church and their immortal interests were depending — is it possible that they should not have been required to believe him the Almighty God, if he were so? Would he and the Apostles have so solemnly assured them that faith in him as the *Son of God* was sufficient, if in truth he had been *the very God?*

2. The same conclusion may be as decisively drawn from *the language perpetually used respecting the Holy Spirit* — language, wholly inconsistent with the idea of a divine person distinct from the Father, and equal with him. The Spirit is said to be *poured out — shed — given — given without measure;* men are said to be *baptized* with it, *filled* with it, to *partake* of it. But this cannot be said of a person. It signifies evidently, in such passages a divine influence; an influence which may descend from the person of the Father, as well as from some distinct person. God does not become another person, because he gives his spirit to men. When Paul visited Ephesus, he found certain Christians there, and asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost. They answered, *we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.* How is this? The Holy Ghost a person in the Godhead, equal with the Father, and essential to salvation to know him, and yet these disciples never heard of him? Impossible — and therefore impossible that it should be a third person in the deity, distinct from the Father, and equal in power and glory. No — the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. Paul tells us what it is, when he says, 'As no man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of a man which is in him; so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God.' The spirit of God is God himself, just as the spirit of a man is the man himself. It is no more a separate person, than a man's spirit is a separate person. Thus the supremacy of the Father remains unaffected.

3. There are also *many expressions respecting Jesus and the Holy Spirit in connexion with each other,* which

confirm the evidence that the Father alone is God. It will be sufficient to cite these without comment; since the mere reading of them will show how utterly irreconcilable they are with the idea of three persons, alike equal and supreme. 'God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy spirit and with power.' — 'Jesus received of the Father the promise of the holy Ghost.' — 'God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him.' — 'He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by the spirit that dwelleth in you.' — Consider what each of these passages must mean if the doctrine of the Trinity be true, and you will perceive them to be utterly irreconcilable with it. Each of the sentences quoted speaks of God, of Jesus, and of the spirit; and this in such manner, that, if each be God, they express a meaning which is absurd.

IV. Thus far we have looked at the testimony of Scripture as exhibited in particular classes of texts. We may now turn to some considerations drawn *from the general style of the New Testament.* Here we shall find that the doctrine of the Divine Unity so pervades and gives a complexion to the New Testament, that if we could conceive the doctrine of the Trinity to be true, it would alter the complexion of the whole. It would not be such as it is, if that doctrine were true.

This may be partially illustrated from the devotional character of the New Testament; from the conduct of the disciples toward their Lord; from the conduct of the Jews toward him, and his disciples; and from the controversies of that age.

1. Look at *the devotional character of the New Testament.* If the Apostles worshipped God in three persons,

it will so appear in their conduct and writings; this circumstance will characterize their devout expressions everywhere. And this the more especially, because they were *Jews*, — a people who worshipped God with a strict and most jealous regard to his unity. They could not have changed their practice in this particular without the change being most strikingly observable. Yet we have no intimation of such a change. They appear to have gone on with the worship of the One God of their fathers, without any alteration. Look at this fact. When Paul was converted, he must have passed — supposing the Trinity to be a christian doctrine — from believing Jesus a blasphemous impostor, to believing him the Lord Jehovah. Is there the least hint of such an amazing change? He speaks with admiration and rapture of the new views and feelings which he enjoyed with his new faith. But all the rest together was not so astonishing and wonderful as this particular change. Yet he nowhere alludes to it. Is it then possible that it could have been so? that so great a revolution of feeling should have taken place, and no intimation of it be found in any act or expression? He speaks frequently of his prayers. And how? 'I bow my knees unto the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*' 'Blessed be the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*' Making mention of you in my prayers, that *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father* of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom.' It is plain therefore to whom Paul directed his worship. — His epistles contain many doxologies and ascriptions of praise to God. And in what terms? Always to One person, God the Father. And *not once*, either in his epistles, or in any other writ-

ing of the Bible, is a doxology to be found, which ascribes praise to Father, Son and Spirit, or to the Trinity in any form. This fact is worth remarking. The New Testament contains, I think, twentyeight ascriptions in various forms; and from not one of them could you learn that the doctrine of the Trinity had been dreamt of in that day.

Honor is doubtless ascribed to the Saviour in terms of gratitude, love, and rapture. It could not be otherwise. How could they, who had seen him, avoid it, when we, who have not seen him, are constrained to love him, and through our faith in him to rejoice with joy unspeakable? Ascriptions of gratitude and honor to the Saviour, who will not render? But this does not prove him to be the Almighty God. When the company around the throne are represented in the Apocalypse as uttering a new song of blessing and honor and glory to *Him who sits upon the throne*, and to the Lamb, it never can be understood that they attribute divinity to the Lamb; much less that he is the same being with him who sits on the throne, — for he is standing *in the midst of the elders*, and is praised because *he was slain*. This is not a description suitable to God. And thus while the New Testament overflows with warm expressions of reverence and gratitude toward Jesus, it is as to the *Son* of God, and it reserves all supreme worship for the Father. Jesus himself worshipped the Father. The language of the Apostles was, 'Giving thanks always to God, even the Father, through Jesus Christ.' And when honor to the Son is spoken of, it is distinctly stated that it is '*to the glory of God the Father.*'

Such is the devotional aspect of the New Testament

— an aspect which it could not possibly present, if the disciples had practised, and meant to teach, the worship of God in three persons.

2. *The manner in which the disciples conducted themselves toward their Master*, is a certain proof to the same point. Conceive that they supposed him to be Infinite Jehovah, the God of their Fathers, whom they had been adoring from their childhood in the strong and awful reverence of the Mosaic worship; and could they have lived and conversed with him freely as they did? Could Peter have rebuked and denied him — Judas betrayed him — and all forsaken him? Impossible — perfectly impossible. Their whole intercourse with him must have worn a wholly different complexion. It is not in human nature to have lived with one whom they knew to be God, and yet to have conducted themselves as if he were not.

3. The same thing may be said of *the conduct of the Jews toward him.* If they had supposed him to be the God of their fathers, is it possible that they should have treated him with violence and contempt? If they did not suppose it, yet knew that he *claimed* to be such, and that his Apostles so regarded him, they must have looked upon him with horror as the highest blasphemer. And would not this have sometimes appeared? This is a very strong point. When he was accused before their Council, and the charge was blasphemy, they were evidently at no small straits to support the charge. The only evidence which they could at last adduce was, that he had said he could raise up the Temple in three days. Now if he had ever claimed, in any way, to be Almighty God, or had given any intimation that he desired to

be so considered, would they not have remembered it against him at such a moment? When they were eager to seize on the most trifling circumstance, when they sought long for false witness before they could find one; is it to be believed they would pass by such a charge as this? And as they were entirely silent concerning it, is it not certain that he could never have made any such claim?

Nothing can be more decisive than this consideration. Yet it may be corroborated, if not strengthened, by adverting to a remarkable incident in his history. Some of the Jews, on a certain occasion, took up stones to stone him. He inquired the cause of their violence. They answered, 'Because thou, being a man, makest thyself God.' To this he replied by a positive denial, and by a full explanation cleared himself of the charge, saying that he claimed to be only 'the Son of God.' After this they seem never to have repeated the accusation; — not even when they were ready to take unfair measures for his condemnation. And yet, strange to say, this explanation, which satisfied his enemies, has not prevented his followers from still insisting to repeat the charge which he refuted — that he, being a man, made himself God.

4. *The conduct of the Jews toward the disciples after their Lord's death*, proves that *they* knew nothing of the Trinitarian doctrine. They were active in establishing a new dispensation of religion, and thus drew on themselves the obloquy, abuse, and persecution of their countrymen. Wherever they went, they were assailed by the Jews with outrage and violence. They were accused of speaking blasphemous words against the holy place

and the law ; of turning the world upside down ; of designing to overthrow the religion of their fathers; and were scoffed at as followers of a master who had died the ignominious death of a malefactor. But they were *never accused of worshipping him, or preaching him as God.* Amidst all their enemies' accusations — about the fairness of which we cannot think they would have been very scrupulous — they never brought forward this. And yet, in the eye of a Jew, it must have been the most hateful thing in their system. To teach that that Nazarene enthusiast, whom they had despised and slain, was the very God whom they had always honored and worshipped, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! — nothing could have so excited them against the new religion and its active propagators. Yet it never formed the ground of their opposition. Is it not therefore certain, that the Apostles never held such a doctrine?

5. Of the same nature is the following argument. There arose several controversies in that age, especially with those Jews who had been converted to Christianity. Some of these are treated of in the Epistles. But it is very observable, that among the questions which thus arose and required explanations from the Apostles, there is no record of any question or controversy respecting the Object of worship. And yet, if the new religion was adding two new objects of worship to that of the old, this would have been, to a Jew, by far the most important, most interesting, and most perplexing of all the peculiarities of the gospel. No such doctrine could have been added to the ancient faith of the Jews, with whom the Unity of God was the proud and distinguishing tenet, without its occasioning some

controversy, between those who received and those who persecuted the new faith. Yet no such controversy took place; neither is there the slightest appearance in the New Testament, that any objection, difficulty, or doubt arose in any quarter upon this ground. Is it not impossible, then, that any such doctrine should have been taught?

V. I have thus gone over a few heads of the Scriptural argument respecting the Divine Unity.

But in speaking thus decidedly respecting the testimony of the Scriptures, we must not be understood to assert, that there is nothing in this volume which seems to favor the Trinitarian doctrine, or that its advocates are altogether without plausible support. Far from it. There are undoubtedly many passages of difficult interpretation, and many expressions, more or less direct, which may be construed to assign Supreme Divinity to the Saviour, and personality to the Spirit. But there are two considerations which go to show, that although this be the case, yet the certainty of our doctrine is not in any degree affected by it.

1. The first of these considerations is, that the texts *which speak most directly and plainly* on this subject, are decidedly Unitarian. These we have already quoted, and no forms of speech could be selected more explicit and unequivocal. But this is not the case with those texts which are quoted in support of the Trinity. Not one of them states the doctrine in so many words. The doctrine is made up by inference and argument from separate texts. Many of these texts are among the most perplexing and difficult passages in the Bible

— passages, which have tried the skill of interpreters in all ages, and have received a variety of expositions. Now it is plain that where such passages are cited in proof of the Trinity, the value of the citation must depend on the correctness of the criticism; that is, on the soundness of the reasoning by which the text is interpreted; that is, the doctrine is thus far supported by the power of reason simply. Need I say how different from the support which our principal texts give to the doctrine of the Unity? Thus it appears that the doctrine of the Trinity is mainly dependent for its support on processes of reasoning; processes, by which the most plain and decisive texts are made to bend to the less plain, and the easy are interpreted by the difficult. We think it safer not thus to trust our power of interpreting dark places, but to take the plain texts for our guide, and solve the dark ones by them. And if there be some which still remain obscure, and which we cannot satisfactorily clear up, we should esteem it safer to leave them as they are, unexplained, than to give them a meaning, and then find ourselves obliged to conform the plain texts to them. In the one case we should think that we followed our own power of logic, and in the other the simple word of revelation.

2. The second consideration to which I referred is this. The *assumption* or *supposition*, which is resorted to in order to make these plain, decisive passages agree with the Trinitarian doctrine, is of a character to confirm us yet more strongly in our belief. This assumption is, that Jesus Christ possessed two perfect natures, the human and the divine; and that he sometimes

speaks and acts as man, and sometimes as God. — Now if this were expressly asserted in Scripture, it would be very well. But it is not so asserted, and, what is more, it is by none pretended to be expressly taught there. It is *argued* that it must be so, because it is a supposition which serves to remove difficulties, and to reconcile the language which is used respecting the Lord. But we have no right, it seems to me, to reason out for ourselves a doctrine of such magnitude as this for such a purpose; especially when it *creates* difficulties quite as embarrassing as those which it removes — it seems to me far more so. For look at the case a moment. The assertion is, that our Lord speaks and acts sometimes as God and sometimes as man. Accordingly when we argue thus — 'he declares that he does not know the day or the hour — he says he can do nothing of himself — he prays to God;' it is then replied, 'He says these things *as man;* he does not, *as man*, possess supreme power, or know the future; and *as man* he prays; but still *as God* he is omnipotent, and omniscient, and asks no blessing from on high.' Now this assertion may support the doctrine of the Trinity, and may evade certain difficulties which Scripture throws in its way; but does it not create a more serious difficulty than it removes? Let any man candidly examine the subject, and say whether it do not. For — I speak it reverently, and my hand trembles as I write — does it not attribute to our Lord a very strange way of speaking, and something of a deceptive manner; to say that he *does not know* when he really does, and that he *cannot do* what he has infinite power to do? For, if he

were God, it would not be *true* that he did not know the future; it would not be *true* that he did not his own will, and did not work miracles of himself. And therefore I beg to ask — in the name of all that is reverent and good — whether we can find it in our hearts to advocate a doctrine, which can be supported only on a supposition which exposes the blessed Jesus to the charge of untruth and deception; a supposition, which would render it impossible, if carried to its full extent, to believe anything which he may say; for one has only to assert — 'he spake this or that in his *human* nature, not as God, and therefore it has no authority;' — and then all his testimony on religious truth may be entirely set aside.

No. Let the plain declarations of our Saviour's word be enough for us; and let us rejoice that we hold a faith, which allows us to believe every word that he said, *just as he uttered it*, without the necessity of explaining away a syllable, on the plea that he sometimes spake in one character and sometimes in another.

Such are a few of the reasons which are directly and indirectly furnished by the Scriptures for holding the doctrine of the undivided Unity of God.

We regard it as the clear and unquestionable doctrine of Holy Writ, and therefore to be held with firm and decided faith. The more confident our persuasion that it is so, the more highly shall we value it, and the more shall we rejoice to see it extended and honored. If we feel that he whom we call Master and Lord, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who lived and died

that he might secure to us the blessing of our religion, and whose kingdom we desire to spread with its holy and beneficent influences — if we believe that *he* taught and inculcated this doctrine; then, as his disciples, we shall desire that it prevail — for it is his Truth.

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WHAT IS IT

TO BE A UNITARIAN?

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WHAT IS IT

TO BE A UNITARIAN?

To this question very different answers may be given, both by the friends and the opponents of the supposed Unitarian system. Ask the opponents, and some of them may tell you, to be a Unitarian is to be a heretic, — that is all they know or wish to know about it. Ask others, and they may tell you, to be a Unitarian is to be an awful creature, and that is enough. Others again may say, it is to be an unbeliever in all the essential doctrines of the Bible, and in the Bible itself. Others still may declare, it is to spurn all moral restraint, and laugh at all serious things. While yet another class may be charitable enough to admit, that to be a Unitarian is to mean well enough, but to be under some great delusion or prejudice, which precludes fair examination of the truth, inflates the mind, chills the heart, exalts reason at the expense of revelation, and thus exposes to the worst errors.

Nor will one and the same answer be given to your question by all the friends of Unitarianism, or those who call themselves Unitarians. For of these, some may tell you, that to be a Unitarian is to be not a Trinitarian or Calvinist. Others, that it is to talk against

Trinitarians and Calvinists. Others, that it is to believe in only one God. Others, that it is to believe what you please and let others believe what they please. Many will tell you, it is to believe in the Bible, let that be what it may. While many more will refer you to a set of doctrines and principles, as constituting Unitarianism. And some may say, to be a Unitarian is to be a good man.

We do not mean that we have known all these answers to be actually given by Unitarians, but that we should infer such to be the opinion of many, who profess themselves not unfriendly to Unitarianism, respecting the import of the name. Nor do we suppose these answers to be any more strange or diverse than would be given to a similar question respecting any other system or sect. If different Calvinists or Methodists were asked what it is to be a Calvinist or a Methodist, they would undoubtedly depart widely from each other, and from any particular standard, in their answers. But besides this general difference, there is something peculiar in regard to ourselves, to which we now refer. From obvious and unavoidable causes, it has been the misfortune of Unitarianism to be associated, not only by those against, but also by many in favor of the system, with the mere negation of certain doctrines, principles, and obligations. No one thing perhaps is so extensively known of us, as that we deny the right of man's interference in matters of conscience, and assert the entire freedom and independence of the individual mind; and no one thing has been more abused. Much as we regret the fact, yet knowing it to be a fact, we wish not to conceal it, that many who call themselves

Unitarians, have a very poor conception of the character which that name denotes, — that is, in our view of the matter: we may be wrong as well as others, and we speak for ourselves only.

To us, the word Unitarian seems one of very high, solemn and comprehensive meaning. By many, it appears to be restricted to a single point, to be a merely doctrinal term, and to have often a low, narrow signification. Originally, no doubt, it was a merely doctrinal term, and referred to the single point of a belief in the strict unity of God as opposed to the trinity. Nor do we object, nor have we a right to object, to the name's being taken by any who do so believe, whatever else they believe or reject. But we do object to its being understood to denote nothing more than this among ourselves generally. We object still more to its being identified with mere freedom from restraint, or opposition to old opinions and ways, so that every man should think himself a Unitarian who professes to be nothing else. We object to any definition or use of the term which makes it negative, narrow or low, requiring very little of those who hold it, in opinion or character. We would not contend for a name, if that were all. But when a word has come, as this has, to represent the religious character, the whole moral complexion and aim of a large part of the community, we would do what we can to give that word a definite meaning, and cause this meaning to be high, broad, commanding, and worthy of the religion to which it pertains. We would for our own sakes, if for that only, have it known that the name by which we are called, so far as it denotes character or purpose, is not a light thing, nor to be assumed

by all who have cast off every other name. We consider any system of doctrines, any statement of mere abstract belief, as giving at best an imperfect view of actual Unitarianism. The soul of this religion lies deeper than these doctrinal statements ever go or can go. In our view, a true Unitarian is not so much one who believes a particular doctrine or number of doctrines, as one who desires and strives to make his belief an incentive to a particular life and character, a religious, useful life, and a religious and forever improving character. His therefore is not so much a peculiar doctrine as a peculiar spirit. And it is this spirit, the true, deep, living spirit of Unitarianism, that we wish now to set forth as well as we can. We think it has been misconceived and wronged by many who are professedly with us, as well as by most against us. And we are quite as anxious to correct our own as others' errors, to improve as to explain and defend our faith. We wish never to see the time, when we shall imagine that we have already attained or are already perfect. It is one our first principles, that there is to be no resting-place, no period, in the intellectual or moral progress, in this life or any other.

But before we speak of principles and spirit, we are stopped by the universal, and as it would seem all important inquiry, — Have you no *peculiar doctrines?* We have doctrines certainly, settled, clear, cherished doctrines, scriptural, rational, life-giving doctrines. How far they are *peculiar*, you will judge. We are not ambitious of being thought peculiar. There is no charm to us in holding a faith unlike every other faith, standing aside and aloof, drawing around us a little circle within which

alone the kingdom of God is to be found. We are willing to think, we rejoice to know and own that our faith, in all that is essential, is held by some of every name. Wherever we go, we see our brethren in every band of Christians, in every separate communion; brethren not only as all are brethren, by a common nature and a common hope, but also by a common faith. We see Unitarians, in the proper doctrinal sense of the term, in every denomination of Christians.

What then is the proper doctrinal sense of the name Unitarian? What does the word denote? It denotes a believer in the strict unity of God, his simple, uncompounded, undivided unity. It involves the doctrine that God is One, in the common sense of the word, one as every other being is one. This is our first doctrine, at least the first that marks us as one division of the christian world. You may call it a peculiar doctrine, if you choose. It is peculiar in this, that it expressly rejects that doctrine which prevails nominally over the larger part of Christendom, the Trinity. This doctrine we reject in every definition and every form that interferes in the least with the simple doctrine of the divine unity. But where, as is the case with thousands of Trinitarians, this doctrine means no more than that God exists and operates under different characters, we see a common faith. We see all we care to see of our first doctrine. It does not distress us, it can never alienate us, that they choose to keep the old name of Trinitarians. They have all that the name Unitarian necessarily denotes, as a doctrinal term. This will explain the fact, so often brought up as a reproach upon us, that many not only of other sects, but even of other religions, are called Uni-

tarians. It is understood that many of the Baptists, and Friends, and the Christian denomination, are believers in the simple, proper unity of God, and so far Unitarians. The same is true of many who reject Christianity altogether. We know the Jews have always held this doctrine tenaciously, and denied that any other could be drawn from their Scriptures. We are told the Mahometans profess the same doctrine. Jews and Mahometans then so far believe as we believe. If any one is so low-minded or so destitute of argument, as on this account to rank us with Jews and Mahometans, and raise a prejudice against us, he may do it. The whole truth of the case is, that if we may be ranked together, it is not because we hold all their opinions, or they all ours, but simply because we all agree in rejecting the Trinity. They and we and all are Unitarians, who believe that God is one, and that one means one and not three, and unity means unity and not trinity nor anything like it.

Here then is one answer to the question, What is it to be a Unitarian? If you ask only what the name itself properly and necessarily denotes, and how many may be brought under it, the answer has just been given. Unitarians are those who hold the doctrine of God's unity in its obvious and proper sense; believing, whatever else they may believe, that 'to us there is one God, even the Father.' If again you ask the import of the other names by which Unitarians are so often called, such as *Rational* Christians and *Liberal* Christians, the answer is easy. By rational, when applied to us or our doctrines, we understand that which is agreeable to reason. We do not understand by rational anything opposed to

revelation, or above revelation, or independent of revelation, or equal to it. We believe that revelation is addressed to men's reason, and that it offers nothing and demands nothing repugnant to reason. We therefore hold nothing repugnant to reason, but are, and are willing to be called, rational Christians. So also are we willing to be called, liberal Christians; not in the sense of loose, or cold, or indifferent, nor that we attach no importance to opinions, or that we regard all alike, or believe no man to be accountable for the correctness of those he adopts or for their influence. Nothing like it. We are liberal in the great Protestant sense, of leaving every man undisturbed, unshackled in the exercise of free inquiry and private judgment, accountable to none but God. We are liberal, in offering the hand of christian fellowship to every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. We are liberal, in believing that all truth is not monopolized by us or any other sect, nor all sincerity or virtue or piety; these may exist, these do exist, under every name, in every church; and wherever they exist, there is the promise of God unto salvation. If asked, still further, whether we do not believe any particular opinions to be better than others, more scriptural and more conducive to holiness, we answer Yes, most emphatically, *Yes*. We believe our opinions far more scriptural and conducive to holiness than any others, and we feel it to be a solemn duty to extend and establish them by all proper means. But we cannot forget that we are fallible, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that others give proofs of sincerity and piety as well as we, and yet hold different opinions. In these respects, for these reasons, we think we may be called *Liberal*.

So much we say of names and their import. The inquirer may go farther, and ask if the term Unitarian denotes nothing more than a belief in the unity of God. We must repeat that in its first and strictest sense it does not denote anything more. But in its received and popular sense, it does mean more than this. How much or precisely what, it is as difficult to say as it is to say precisely what the term Trinitarian denotes, a term that takes in Catholics, Calvinists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, and some Friends and Universalists. Here are widely different sects holding a common doctrine and therefore taking a common name, though the doctrine itself is very differently defined by these sects and by the churches and individuals who compose any one of them. So of Unitarian. Indeed this is a much more definite term, less extended and less varied than the other. Still a great variety of creed and form passes under the common name Unitarian, so that we cannot define its popular sense except in the most general way. We can only say what are the leading doctrines held by all Unitarians of whom we have any knowledge, and so far essential to the system. These are few and simple. We will mention them briefly, for we have something else in view.

Our common doctrine in regard to God has been given. We need only add, that we believe his character to be better expressed by *Father* than by any other word. He is a sovereign, a judge, a disposer; but in all and above all, a Father. Those are attributes and offices; this is the character, the being. He is infinite and eternal, giving all and directing all, in unerring wisdom and impartial love. His nature none can comprehend;

but his character is seen everywhere, and everywhere the same. He is the perfection of justice and mercy, inseparable and unchangeable. This is our view of God, and on this our religion stands.

Our common doctrine in regard to Christ is this. He is the son of God, the promised Messiah, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world. 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' In this we see the origin and purpose of Christianity, and the character of its author. It is a divine system, originating in the love of God, and having for its object the salvation of men. Its author and finisher is Jesus Christ, the Son of God; who came in the power, wisdom and glory of God; who spake as never man spake, giving a sublime revelation and perfect doctrine, establishing its truth by works which no man could do except God were with him; who suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; whom God highly exalted, raised from the dead, and gave him authority to execute judgment also; who will reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet, when he will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, and the Son also himself shall be subject unto him who put all things under him, that God may be all in all. This, in scripture language, is our belief respecting the character and offices of Christ. We regard this as essential to Christianity. We believe we may say it is the faith of every Unitarian. In these points at least we can say confidently all Unitarians are agreed; viz. that Christ is the Son of God, inferior to the Father, but dwelling in the Father and the Father in him;

that in his life he proclaimed and by his death sealed a new and perfect religion; that he is the foundation of the Christian's hope, and that faith in him, repentance of sin, and obedience, are the terms of his salvation.

Our common belief in regard to man is, that he is free and accountable; entering life with no moral character, with no sin and no holiness, but with large capacities for both; the subject of a moral government here, and destined to another, and endless life, where his condition will be determined by his character, under the dominion of a perfectly just and unalterably kind Father.

In this last is implied another of our common doctrines, and in our view an essential part of the christian system. It is a belief in a future state of righteous retribution, where God will render to every man according to his deeds. 'We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.'

Once more, we regard everything as the gift of God. Man has nothing and can do nothing except by the power and grace of God. The blessings of earth are beyond his desert; how much more the joy of heaven, the gift of immortality! It is within the reach of the lowliest, if he be faithful; but the highest can never demand it. It is offered to all; but to all it must be of grace, not of debt.

These are our common doctrines. We hold them to be the prominent and the only essential parts of Christianity. Every man who receives these we regard as a christian believer and a Unitarian. Any man who does

not receive them, we regard as not holding the true faith, and of course not a Unitarian in any proper sense. Faith in God as the Creator, Ruler and Father of the universe, one and unchangeable — faith in Christ, the Son of God, the Mediator between God and man and the author of salvation to all who believe, repent and obey — faith in man's absolute dependence, freedom and accountableness — faith in an endless existence, in which the good will be happy infinitely beyond their merits, and the wicked miserable just in proportion to their wickedness — this is Unitarian Christianity. To nothing less than this are we willing to give the name, nothing more are we prepared to demand. 'This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.'—'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.'

We have now answered the question, 'What is it to be a Unitarian' — first, as to the name itself, and then as to the distinguishing doctrines which it involves, doctrines held by all true Unitarians, as we understand the term, and believed by them to constitute the essentials of Christianity. If any object, that these are not distinguishing doctrines, not peculiar to us, we are glad to hear it. The less peculiar they are, the better. We have already given it as our opinion and our rejoicing, that our most valued doctrines are held by some, by many, of every name. It constitutes to us no small part of the value of our faith, and no slight proof of its soundness, that its great principles, its elemental truths, stand out so brightly on the very face of revelation, and re-

ceive such ready and cordial support from nature and reason, that none can wholly reject them. None ever have. Many have modified, darkened, distorted and corrupted them, but they have never been able, if disposed, to prevent them from securing a place and retaining it among the very foundations of Christianity in all time and place. Is not this better than any singularity or monopoly?

But this is not the whole of Unitarianism. It is not a mere name. It is not a system of abstract doctrines. It is rather a system of principles and influences. It is a spirit more than a letter, a character more than a creed. We have shown that it has doctrines and insists upon them; that it has a creed, if the Christian revelation be a creed, and requires all its disciples to subscribe it. But beside this, there are certain great principles on which it stands, and from which, more than from anything else, it takes its distinctive character. These principles *may* exist under any form of Christianity; under ours they *must* exist. They belong to it. They constitute its life. Without them, no one, in our estimation, possesses the spirit, no one deserves or understands the name, of a true Unitarian. What are these principles?

1. We believe religion to be founded in relations and powers, not in creeds, professions and covenants. Understanding by religion moral obligation, we think it results altogether from the nature which God has given man and the relations in which he has placed him. By these we define and measure his obligations. If his nature is high, capable of indefinite advancement in all that is excellent, he is bound to make that advancement.

If his relations are exalted and infinite, if he is the child of God and can love and serve him, if he is the member of a vast family whose interests he can promote, he is bound to live in view of all these relations and act worthily of them. If, beside countless favors and infinite capacities, he has received a gracious and perfect revelation, assuring him of an endless existence, and offering to fill that existence with glory and bliss, the very knowledge of this is enough to create the highest obligation that there can be. In fewer words, religious obligation has its foundation in the constitution of our nature, not in any name that we may assume or any professions we may make. Having boundless capacities and knowing that we have them, receiving a revelation from God and acknowledging it to be from God, we are as much bound to learn and do the will of God, as the most solemn covenants of words or forms or doctrines can ever make us. And the extent of the obligation is exactly commensurate with the ability. All that a man can do, he should do, in gratitude to Him who has given him everything, and in aid of those who are alike dependent and accountable.

Thus do we measure religious obligation entirely by knowledge, capacity, privilege. We hold no man excused from leading a religious life, because he has not professed or promised to do it. The only question is, does he know himself to possess religious capacities? Does he know that he is dependent upon God for all he has or can have, and that he is to live forever? If he does know this, he is guilty unless he lives worthily of the knowledge and the power. If he is ignorant of it through his own fault, not having used his opportunities of know-

ledge, he is still guilty. This is our first view of religion, and from this we deduce an all-important practical principle. Our duty is limited by nothing but our capacity. In knowledge, in faith, in piety and active duty, we are to look as high, reach as far, and become as perfect as possible. Until this is done, something remains to be done. No one has finished the work given him to do until he has enlarged and exercised all his powers to their full extent in the service of God and man.

2. We believe this service, to be acceptable, must be voluntary. Obligation is not voluntary, but obedience must be, or it will not be the religion which God and nature ask of us. It may begin in a mere sense of duty, the acknowledgment of an authority that cannot be disputed and a power dreadful if resisted. It may begin with the fear of God, or even the fear of man, dread of persecution, reproach, loss of property or life. But any service springing from these motives can be of little worth, until it leads to something better. Pure religion we believe to be the free-will offering of a trusting and grateful heart. God is to be worshipped, not merely because he demands it, but because it is our happiness to render it. In truth, his worship, his service, is our happiness — the enlargement of our powers, the exercise of kind affections, the cherishing of holy desires, the forming of habits and the strengthening of principles, hopes, and aspirations, that bring with them their own reward. And these must of necessity be voluntary. You cannot extort them. You cannot create them for another. No conceivable power can create them without the will and aid of the individual. It is their very nature and life to be personal, free, cheerful, and in the best sense, voluntary.

From this we deduce the folly and wickedness of every thing like coercion in religion. No matter what form or instrument it employs, — whether it attempts to awe into submission, to chain the mind, to break the spirit by racks or creeds, by extorting promises or blasting reputation, — it all violates the spirit and defeats the purposes of religion. Though in this way you could bring the whole world to subscribe to the best creed that an Apostle could frame, to worship in the true temple and observe the right forms, though you could render it impossible that they should ever abjure this faith for another, what would you gain? Not religion. Religion may come of it in some cases, but it is far more likely to produce a stinted, sordid service, blind credulity, tame submission, formal obeisance, if not hypocrisy and infidelity. The history of the Church and the world has proved this. All attempts to prevent difference of opinions, to produce uniformity of faith, and compel men to be good, have been worse than fruitless, and in the nature of things must be. This is acknowledged by all now, though not acted upon by all. We hold it to be not only a self-evident, but a most important truth. We think all the means used to promote personal and public religion, should have regard to it and hold it sacred. We expect little from any attempts to build up the kingdom of Christ in the heart or the world, which do not seek to build that kingdom upon freedom of conscience, a rational faith and a voluntary service.

3. It is a part of these views and of our system, that religion must stand upon principle. We value forms, and would always encourage their use, for we

believe the religion of most men requires them, and the religion of all will be aided by their proper observance. We value professions to a certain degree, for we think Christ calls all his followers to profess him before men in some way, and that beside its good influence as an example, it may do something to strengthen and secure the faith and obedience of the individual. But neither forms nor professions constitute religion. That lies deeper, in settled moral principles; forms and professions are valuable only as they look to this and help to create it. And by principle we mean one of the elements of the character; a sentiment so deeply planted as to belong to the man himself, to go with him wherever he goes and cause its presence and power to be felt in everything he does. It is not liable to accident. It is not the creature of circumstances. It is not a fever, to-day consuming the life, to-morrow cooling away as if it had no power. Nor is its influence confined to objects or seasons professedly religious. It extends to everything that is done or felt. It controls the thoughts. It hallows the affections. It restrains the lips from guile, malice and all impure communication. It holds the temper and the passions in subjection. It keeps the conscience clear and the hands clean. It prompts to diligence in business as well as fervor of spirit. It pays regard to the most common as well as uncommon calls; to the duties of the present, the interests of society, the demands and proprieties of life, as making a part of the good work for which we were sent into the world, and helping to form the character and train the soul for higher action in a wider sphere.

This is moral, religious principle. This is religion it-

self, and nothing short of this, in our view. It is an habitual reference in everything to the truth and will of God. Its influence reaches every part of the character and life. It pervades the character, and is itself the life. We look with distrust on all appearances of religion that fail of moulding the character and directing the life, or at least that allow anything opposed to strict virtue. We cannot regard that religion as genuine, however sound in faith or exact in form, which encourages or permits or does not unequivocally condemn, the neglect of common duties. And if besides this, it seeks to hide or gloss over any offence against morality, the least departure from integrity or purity, we more than distrust it, we pronounce it false and pernicious. Morality is not religion, but it is essential to it. The first, as it is usually understood, may exist without the last, but the last is empty, deceiving, and may be ruinous without the other. Morality can never be religion, if it denote anything less than the devotion of the heart and consecration of the life to God. We would place the standard of religious character as high as possible, as high as human nature can reach in its greatest strength with all its powers. Not a faculty is to be unemployed, not a duty slighted, not a feeling or thought disregarded, not a day or hour wasted. If we would be truly religious, if we would build our religion on principle, we must make everything subservient and in harmony. We must task every power and engage every feeling. We must allow no object to come into competition with this, nor think this accomplished so long as we are capable of higher spiritual attainments. Not that we are to despair of acceptance until we reach the highest point.

We may be sure of acceptance if we aim at that point and steadily advance, however distant we may be.

4. This we may state as another of our principles. We believe that the Christian's mark should always be high, his spirit always lowly. He must look to Jesus as his example: and will he not be humble, when he thinks of the distance between himself and that sinless character, that elevated virtue, that devoted and holy life? He must look to the perfection of God, as that for which he is to strive, which he is commanded to imitate. 'Be ye holy, for I am holy.' — 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' This is the command; it must be obeyed to the very extent of our ability. This is the mark; the eye must be fixed upon it, and the hopes, affections and energies reach after it perpetually. That we can never think we have attained it, need not be said. Every thought of its infinite height will humble us. Too lowly we can never feel, in the vast comparison. The feeling will become stronger rather than weaker as we advance; for the nearer we approach, the more shall we see and know of the divine perfection. As our conceptions are enlarged, our souls will be penetrated with adoration, cast down in reverence and humility. This is our view of the growth of the christian character. It is always to rise, but always to think humbly of itself, and the more humbly the higher it rises; having larger views of God, and juster conceptions of its own infinite powers and comparatively sluggish affections and low attainments. The best men will be the most humble. We cannot conceive of boasting and glorying because the struggling spirit is born into a new moral creation. If its

darkness is dispersed and light has dawned upon it, it must see the more clearly its own poverty, guilt and deformity, and the immense work to be done before it can ever redeem the time it has lost, raise its desires from the dust in which they have grovelled, and begin its upward course. Contrition and humility, not boldness and triumph, will be its temper.

And this temper, as we have already implied, will never cease to be proper. It is a view of religion on which we earnestly insist and in which we rejoice, that there can be no limit to the religious progress. As this life is the beginning of existence, we believe it to be but the beginning of virtue, even where that virtue is most matured. He who has made the best use of the longest life, has but set out on the great journey. Death may bring a period to his trials, but not to his exertions, not surely to his progress. To that there can be no period. Rest is promised to the people of God; but we believe it to be rest only from trouble, anxiety and sin, not inaction, not repose, not sluggishness or satiety. A full reward there will be for those who have been faithful, but not a reward implying that their service is finished and that nothing but passive enjoyment remains. The rest and reward will both be suited to our powers and affections; removing all obstacles to their enlargement and full action, freeing them from corruption and delusion, and giving them new motives, a larger sphere, a holier communion, the communion of just men made perfect, of Jesus and of God. I do not mean that we attempt to describe the happiness of the future, or pretend to know in what it will consist. But we are confident that the great element of this happi-

ness will be the power of making more rapid advancement in all that is good, all that can delight and exalt immortal spirits. Nor can we believe that the end of our existence will be answered, or the work of religion done, until all the faculties of the soul are purified, enlarged, and joyfully pressing on in humility, gratitude, reverence, and a growing resemblance to the Saviour who redeemed us, and to the God who formed us for immortality.

5. We mention one other principle, which we have already expressed in part. It is a belief in man's accountableness. We cannot easily speak of it as we would. It is a fearful subject, and we would not venture to assert more than we know to be true, nor would we keep back that which revelation has declared too plainly to be doubted. We have little confidence in any statements or reasonings except those of revelation on such a subject. Nor again do we think it right to understand in its strongest literal sense that language of revelation which all allow to be figurative. This is the case with most of the language used in Scripture relating to retribution. Both the happiness and misery of the future state are set forth in figures too bold to admit a literal construction. Very few, if any, interpret them literally. All that we insist upon is the great fact which they clearly teach, — the fact of a righteous retribution, happiness to the good, misery to the wicked. On this point we have no hesitation, no doubt at all. It seems as clear to us as the fact of continued existence. It is taught in language that all can understand, language capable, we think, of but one meaning. 'God will render to every man according to his deeds.'

'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'— We understand from such declarations that every man is accountable for everything he does, for the use of every faculty and every privilege, and will receive according to his use of them, whether it be good or bad. His happiness, his destiny, are in his own hand, placed there by his Maker and Judge, and he must choose for himself and act for himself in regard to them. But the consequences of his choice and his actions will not soon terminate. By the constitution of his nature, by the ordinations of God, by all the laws of his present and future existence, the character he here forms will go with him and visit upon him joy or sorrow, bliss or anguish, God knoweth how long. He should feel therefore that in every hour of the present, he is fixing the complexion of his future existence. Every action may do something. Every habit will do much. Every passion that grows into an affection, that fastens upon his nature and exerts the influence of a settled principle, is of solemn, incalculable importance. Too watchful or solicitous he cannot be. He has entered upon an eternal existence, and he should live for eternity, governed habitually by this momentous truth, that he may purchase for himself and many more an enduring inheritance of weal or wo.

These are some of the principles that distinguish Unitarianism. If it be said, as before, that they do not distinguish it, not being peculiar to it, we reply again, it is all the better. They do distinguish it in the only sense that we desire. They belong to it. They are essential and vital. They are held, I believe, by all Unitarians, and are dear to all. They do not express all

we believe and feel. There are truths peculiar to the christian system, and embraced by us, to which I have not adverted. These that have been mentioned have seemed to me as important as any, as common and as characteristic as any. Taken in connexion with the doctrines first presented, they furnish an answer, — from which few I think will dissent, however imperfect they may consider it, — to the question, What is it to be a Unitarian? Should I attempt to answer that question for myself in a single sentence, I would say, — to be a Unitarian, is to feel and live as a rational, free, favored, accountable and immortal being; relying on the mercy of God our Father, believing and obeying the religion of Christ his Son, our Saviour and only Master, performing cheerfully all present duties, acting from a vital principle of grateful, humble reference to Him who holdeth our souls in life, and doing all we can to raise ourselves and others to be "partakers of the divine nature."

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NINTH SEMIANNUAL REPORT

OF HIS SERVICE AS A

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REPORT.

To the Executive Committee of the

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

GENTLEMEN, — A considerable interest having been excited, both in England and in New York, in the cause of establishing a ministry at large for the poor of cities, I have had some communication with gentlemen in those places upon this subject. A very favorable impression, I find, has been made of the claims of this ministry; and there is not only a readiness, but a strong disposition in many, at once to establish and to support it. The difficulty, however, I am told, which presses with the greatest force against this object, is that of obtaining fit instruments for the service. But this difficulty, I apprehend, is not in the fact, that there are not suitable instruments enough at hand for the work. I can hardly believe, among the great numbers who are consecrating themselves to the christian ministry, and above all if we look to the almost equal numbers who are now devoting themselves, with unexampled zeal and energy, to the various objects of christian philanthropy, that many, and that more than are wanted cannot be found, who are suited to make this ministry one of the greatest of bless-

ings which can be extended to cities. The difficulty, I imagine, of finding fit instruments for it, arises from the want of distinct conceptions of its objects, and of the means of accomplishing them. In some important respects, the service is a new one; and the experiment of its usefulness and claims has yet been but very partially made. Even those who have been the longest engaged in it, have much to learn of the duties and interests which are involved in it. We may, however, give the results of our observation and experience in the work; and these, perhaps, will furnish the best lights which can be obtained, respecting the qualifications of the instruments which are to be sought for it. Happy shall I be, if, by any exposition I can give of the objects of this ministry, and of the principles of operation which have been adopted in it, I may do anything to induce those who are qualified, to offer themselves for the service; and thus forward in any measure the benevolent designs of those, who are waiting only for the agents whom they may commission and employ in it.

Allow me, however, before I enter upon this topic, to express my ardent desire that the friends of this ministry will do what they can, in its first establishment, to secure its permanency, by appointing those alone to it, who will be disposed to devote to it their hearts, and *their lives.* I should be deeply sorry to see this office made a mere stepping-stone to the ministry in our churches; and, certainly, not less sorry to see men called to it, who, having shown their incapacity in every other department of useful exertion, have therefore been thought to be at least qualified to act as ministers of the poor.

The truth is, that if this ministry shall be committed to incompetent, however zealous agents, it may be an instrument for the increase, rather than the prevention of the evils it is intended to stay and to correct; and it will very soon be followed, first by the distrust, and then by the discouragement, even of those who were the most earnest of its supporters. Here, indeed, is not only scope, but demand, as well for the energies of intellect and of judgment, as for the zeal of affection and of benevolence; nor do I believe that there is any better school for the cultivation of the intellectual and moral nature, than is to be found in this service.

I have been accustomed to speak of this office as *a ministry at large* for the poor of cities. This has not arisen from any general objection to the term *missionary*, as applied to the service. No one has a higher respect than I have for the office of a Christian Missionary. When I first entered upon the service in which I am now engaged, I felt a happiness to which no language can give expression, in the thought, 'I am now a missionary to the poor.' But after I had passed a year in this work, and had learned something of the extent of the field in which I was laboring; of the condition, and the character, and wants, intellectual and moral, of the subjects of this ministry; of the variety of the objects constantly demanding attention, and the diversified modes of operation that are required in it; and, above all, when I perceived that little comparatively could be done that was effectual of much good, till the minister was trained for the service by discipline and experience, and till he had obtained also the decided respect, and confidence, and even affection of those

with whom he should become connected in this office; I then felt the importance of making this *a permanent ministry*. In my first semi-annual report of the second year of my service, I therefore proposed this permanent ministry, and called it 'a ministry at large for the poor of cities.' I have no strong predilection for this mode of designating the office. But I am greatly desirous of seeing, — or if this may not be, that others should see, — a new class of ministers arising for this service, who will consecrate themselves wholly to it. The continuance of a minister in this office, and in the place where he shall exercise it, is, I think, of far more importance, than in that of our churches. Nay, more; I venture to say, that a minister will not only be able to do thrice the good in the fifth year in which he shall labor in this field, which he could do in the first; but that, at the close of each successive year in it, if he shall possess the true spirit of his ministry, he will find his soul bound to it by stronger ties; by ties, the disruption of which would be among the most painful of the trials he could be called to bear. Let it then be called, if so it shall be preferred to call it, a missionary service. But I beseech its patrons and supporters to seek for it men, who will give to it all their faculties, and all their days. And I equally beseech those who may be disposed to engage in this good work, to enter upon it with the sentiment, if they shall find themselves suited for it, that for this work they will live, and in this work they will die. If such a ministry can be obtained — and it should be demanded till it is obtained, — and made commensurate with that part of the population of cities which is not under the pastoral charge of the ministers of their

churches, not only will much thus be done to supersede the necessity of the cumbrous police which is now thought to be essential to large cities, but by this means, and by this means only, can the divinely benevolent design of our Lord in regard to this part of the population of cities be accomplished, that they shall be blessed, or made happy, here and hereafter, through his gospel.

I come then to the question, The objects of this ministry, and the principles of operation in it, what are they? By giving such an answer as I may to these questions, something may perhaps be done to aid any one who is interested in the subject to decide, either respecting himself or another, whether he have the qualifications that are required for it.

First, then, let us look at the objects of this ministry. What are they? What are their claims upon us? What are our responsibilities in regard to them?

I assume,—and may I not?—that the gospel of Christ is to be preached to all who shall be willing to hear it; and to the poorest and most ignorant, as well as to the wisest and richest of men. How, then, I would ask, are the great body of the poor of cities to be blessed through the gospel, or the religion of Christ? By the ministry which is established in the churches of cities? As our religion is now administered in these churches, this cannot be. In these churches, or religious societies, there are often more than two, and sometimes more than three hundred families, which demand the frequent personal attentions of their ministers. They demand also not only careful and laborious preparations for the public instructions of Sunday, but other

occasional, and it may be frequently recurring services, which require the retirement and study of the minister who would wisely and profitably discharge them. And yet, while no large city in Christendom has ever comprehended in its religious societies more than three fourths of its inhabitants; and while, in many cities, even a much larger proportion of their inhabitants has for ages been unconnected with any of their churches, or religious societies, the guilt of leaving this large number uncared for, with respect to their spiritual condition, their moral exposures, and the objects of the gospel concerning them, seems hardly to have occurred to the mind of the most zealous and philanthropic believers of the religion of Christ. Because each religious society has some who are poor among its members, and because we have been accustomed to the spectacle of well filled churches, and of quiet streets on Sundays, it has therefore been inferred, that all is well in regard to the means for the religious instruction of all. But it is now known, that even in our favored city, — and the sun shines not on one containing an equal number of inhabitants in which better provision is made for religious, as well as for other instruction, — there are thousands who were under no pastoral care, and were in the way of no direct religious influences, till a special ministry was instituted for them. It is, then, for such as these, wherever they are to be found, that I would plead for a new, and a distinct ministry. It is for those, who, from the want of suitable attire, or from the frequency of their removals from one part of a city to another; or from the charge of young children whom they cannot leave; or from the pride which revolts from appearing

in a free seat; or from insensibility and indifference to all the interests and claims of religion; or from vice and recklessness; or from feebleness, or sickness, or old age, are seldom, and perhaps never, to be seen in our churches. And is not christian instruction as important for these classes of our fellow-beings, as it is for those who form our religious societies? And will it not, to a very great extent at least, if it can be wisely and affectionately administered to them, bring to them an inestimable blessing?

But I must speak more definitely of the specific objects of this ministry. I would say, then, that they may be divided into three classes. In the first class I would place the pastoral charge, and the religious instruction of the poor. These are its highest objects. In the second class I would comprehend all those offices of christian sympathy and kindness, which are called for by the various necessities and sufferings of the poor. These are indeed offices, which any christian friend might perform for them; for which the poor need a friend, and often know not where to look for one; and by performing which, the minister may not only communicate very great immediate relief and happiness, but incidentally be an instrument for the prevention of much evil, and even of advancing the highest objects of his office. And in the third class I would place the services which the minister may perform, by the communications he may make respecting poverty and the poor to the more favored classes; by the influences he may exert, in calling forth kindly and christian sentiments in these classes towards each other; and by the aid he may give in the various measures, both private and

public, which may be taken either for the remedy or the prevention of pauperism and crime. Let me say a few words respecting each of these departments of the service to which I wish to call public attention, and in which I am greatly desirous to engage a strong and an extended interest.

The objects of this ministry which belong to the first class, are, in truth, no other than those which our Lord announced as objects of his own ministry, when he applied to himself the language in which Isaiah had spoken of the long promised Messiah, 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach glad tidings to the poor.' A minister at large is to seek out, and to connect himself in this office with, as many as he can of the families of the poor who belong to no religious society, and are regularly visited by no minister. In these families he is to be a religious teacher, a christian pastor. These families are to constitute his flock, his charge. By this ministry, therefore, the whole body of the poor are to be made, as they cannot otherwise be made, the objects of a christian interest. They are to be instructed in the principles of the christian faith, of a christian life, and of the christian salvation. Jesus Christ is to be made known to them in his character, his offices, his life and his death. His precepts, his promises, his warnings, his consolations, in all their comprehensiveness and simplicity, are to be brought distinctly before the minds, and addressed to the hearts, of the poorest, and even the most degraded and despised of our fellow-beings. If, then, it has been clearly proved that it is practicable, by this ministry, to extend this christian

instruction and care to multitudes, who otherwise would not receive them; if parents and children who would otherwise be living in heathenish darkness, may be brought to open their minds to religious knowledge, and to put forth their efforts for a religious character; and if these objects are not to be attained but by the institution and maintenance of a ministry distinct from that of the religious congregations of a city, is it not a solemn duty of those who are dedicating themselves to the office of the christian ministry, to look to this among the other fields of labor which the gospel is opening before them? And then, too, are not the obligations of maintaining this ministry as unequivocal, and as imperative, as are those of supporting the ministry in our churches?

Direct religious instruction, however, forms but one, though without doubt the most important, department of this service. Objects of the second class are daily, and almost hourly forcing themselves upon our attention, and soliciting our care. The condition of the class of the poor which falls under the charge of a minister at large, is one which calls for almost every possible form and exercise of christian benevolence. I do not mean only, or principally, that they are experiencing almost every possible kind of physical want. Yet these wants must not, and by a mind which has any of the benevolence of the gospel cannot, be disregarded; for how can we hope to make religious impressions, or to exert religious influences upon the soul while the half clad, shivering, starving body asks for fuel, or for food, or for a garment, as the greatest of blessings? But, even to meet these pressing necessities wisely and effectually, we must look beyond them. Many of the poor suffer greatly, — or if,

through the power of habit, they do not suffer as we should in the same circumstances, they are yet miserably destitute, — from ignorance, or a disregard of the means of comfort which are within their reach. Some have abundant capacities for self-support, but are altogether indisposed to labor; and others are daily expending for their intemperate and debasing appetites, the earnings by which they might feed and clothe their families. Some are inefficient, and need to be excited. They may even need the assistance of a friend to obtain employment for them. And with regard to others, there is no more important service which can be rendered, at once for their immediate comfort, and the preparation of their minds for religious instruction, and for religious exercises, than sympathy and aid in the charge of their children. These children, if left in the sole charge of their parents, will neither receive instruction in a school, nor discipline at home. They will grow up in ignorance, lawlessness, vagrancy and crime. Sometimes it may be the kindest and most important office that can be performed for a family, to obtain its removal to another neighborhood; for their peculiar dangers and sufferings may arise from the neighborhood in which they live. And sometimes, by other judicious counsel in a time of perplexity and embarrassment, or by the supply of some want which is very painfully felt in sickness, we may rescue from dangers of a very threatening character, and obtain a strong hold upon the mind for higher and better objects. There is, indeed, no service so small, and no office so humble, that it does not properly come within the official duties of a minister at large. He will more gladly bow himself to wash the feet of the chief

of sinners, than of the greatest of saints, if he can thus win the sinner's heart. He is to be, emphatically, and in all things, the poor man's friend, as well as minister; and to acquaint himself not only with the mind and heart of the poor, but with all the circumstances which are exerting an influence on their hearts and characters. These circumstances may be, and often are, wholly beyond the control of the individuals who suffer from them; and may yet be within the power of one who is disposed to act as their benefactor and friend. These circumstances have therefore very strong claims upon the regard of a minister of the poor; and if they should be overlooked by him, or thought unworthy of attention, I should not be very sanguine in my expectations of good from all the other services which he could render.

To the third class of the duties of a minister at large belong all those offices, in which he may engage as a medium of communication, and of connexion, between the classes of society. He goes to the poor, and to the poorest, primarily indeed as a minister of Christ, and for the purpose of preaching to them 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.' But he goes to them from among those who are not poor. Nor is it understood merely that he is, and unless he shall have sufficient property, that he must be, supported in his office by the rich. It is known, too, that as far as he is enabled to relieve the poor under the the pressing wants of their poverty, it is through the sympathy of the rich, who have made him their almoner. He has therefore daily opportunities, and if he be wise he will not fail to improve them, of calling forth the kindly affections of the poor towards

the rich; giving to them christian views of the connexion which God has instituted between all human interests, and human duties; and of inculcating the principles which will secure fidelity in duty, even in the poorest and lowest of all the employments of life. And he has frequent opportunities in his daily intercourse, and occasional ones in the Reports which he may make of his services, of giving to the rich a knowledge of poverty and of the poor, which is not otherwise to be obtained. It is, however, and it must not be forgotten that it is, a very partial trial which has yet been made of this ministry. It has indeed conduced, and it is conducing, to very great good. But I not only feel deeply, that we have much to learn of the best modes of operation in it, in view of the two first classes which I have named of its duties; but equally of those of the third class. Let this ministry be continued, and be wisely appointed, and wisely conducted, and it will do more, I believe, than can be done by any other agency, for making the rich and the poor advantageously known to each other; and, through the knowledge and feeling which it may extend of their intimate relation to each other as God's children, and of the inseparable connexion which exists between all their various interests, for the excitement and maintenance of a mutual christian sympathy, and feeling of brotherhood, between them. I have often, indeed, felt a strong doubt whether this ministry, if it shall be committed to fit instruments, and maintained at once on the part of those who engage in it, and of those who support it, with a spirit worthy of its importance and its claims, would not in every view of it, be as great a blessing to the rich, as to the poor. It may do more than any leg-

islation can accomplish for checking the progress of pauperism and crime. It may bind the employed to the employer by stronger ties than any pecuniary compensation could form. And in various ways, which will readily occur to any one who will reflect upon the subject, it may be made one at least of the strongest bonds of moral connexion, which can be formed between the great classes of the rich and the poor. And on what other, I ask, than moral bonds, is any reliance to be placed in the great exigencies of human society? Above all, under a government like ours, what may not be feared from an extent of pauperism, like that which exists in the old world? What may not be feared from a division and hostility among us of the classes of society, analogous to that which the pride, and extravagance, and licentiousness of wealth, not less than of titles and rank, have produced there? And where, or in what is our security against these evils, but in a prevalence among all classes of the principles, and spirit of the gospel of Christ?

I could not satisfy myself with saying less of the objects of this ministry. But I feel no small diffidence in coming to the question, of the modes of action in it. I have my own modes of action in this service, and others have theirs; and I devoutly hope that others will still arise, and come after us, who will better comprehend its interests, and more skilfully teach, as well as discharge its duties, than can even the most zealous, intelligent and devoted of those, who are now engaged in it. But as there are few favors for which I am more grateful than for any hint which will aid me in seeking the improvement and happiness of those with whom I

am or may be connected in this work, I hope that I shall not be thought to have exposed myself to the imputation of arrogance, if I shall give some of the results of my own observations in it. There is, indeed, no topic of this subject, on which so much is yet to be learned, or I may even say to be discovered, as on this. Nor is this a circumstance to excite any surprise. For why is it, that in all the other departments of the administration of our religion, so little, compared with what might have been expected, is accomplished but that so much is yet to be learned in them all, of the most effectual methods of bringing divine truth to its just and proper bearings on the human mind? Why is the most solicitous domestic instruction, and why is the most vigilant parental care, so often unavailing? And why also are our pulpits, the pastoral visits of our clergy, our schools, and our books of christian piety and morals, exerting no more salutary and life-giving influences, but that they are yet far short of what they should be, and of what a better knowledge of the true means of recommending religion, and of bringing it home to the human soul, would make them? I repeat, therefore, that I do not here assume the office of a teacher. On the contrary, I will gratefully sit at the feet of any one, who can give me any new lesson of which I may avail myself in this service. There are, however, two or three general questions respecting modes of operation in it, upon which I am willing to offer an opinion. I refer to the inquiries, which have repeatedly been proposed to me, how may the greatest number of that part of the population of a large city, for which this ministry is intended, be most efficiently brought within the influence of its in-

struction and care? Is it desirable to have chapels or churches built for the poor? And should this ministry be made an instrument, through the poor who can be gathered by it into congregations, for forming new religious societies and new churches in our cities? I can do little more, in the space which I have, than simply to express an opinion on these subjects.

'How, then,' it may be asked, 'may the greatest number of that part of the population of a large city, for which this ministry is intended, be most efficiently brought within the influence of its instruction and care? Should each minister, for this purpose, consider a whole city as before him, in every part of which he is to seek out those whom he may connect with the religious denomination to which he belongs; or, should he take a single district, within which he will confine his objects and his labors?'—I do not hesitate to reply, that if it shall be the great design of a minister of the poor to collect the largest number, who will profess themselves to be of his own denomination of Christians, he may very probably be most successful by rejecting all limits to the field of his ministry. But if he shall have the infinitely higher purpose, to aid the largest number which he may in becoming practical Christians, he will mark out for himself bounds, which will comprehend as many as he can faithfully serve as a christian friend; and to each individual of these will endeavor to commend himself,—not as an Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, or Congregationalist, or as Orthodox or Unitarian, but simply—as a follower and minister of Christ. I fear, indeed, for this ministry, from nothing so much, as from its exposure to the narrowness and bigotry of party spirit in its instru-

ments. Surely we have seen enough of the influence of this spirit, to admonish us, in any new enterprise for the advancement of the spirit of Christ, to shun and escape it, as, in any other enterprise, we would be warned against the circumstances which have brought disappointment, and perhaps failure to those who embarked in it. Here, in truth, is a call for men who acknowledge no master but Christ; who hold themselves amenable to no human authority for their judgments upon questions regarding religious doctrines; and who, making Christ their model, and Christ their teacher, go to their work, 'in Christ's stead to beseech men to be reconciled to God.' Let such men, within as narrow a space as they can, each find three hundred families, to whom in every practicable way of usefulness, they will from day to day, minister, and not only will they find within this circle sufficient employment for every hour which they can give to their work, but they will save much time which must otherwise be wasted in passing over the long distances which will be between the objects of their charge; and they will show also the respect which is due to others, who would devote themselves to the same ministry. Nor have I a doubt that a far greater good would thus be attained, than could be by traversing a much larger field, and by doubling or tripling the number to whom the visits of a minister might be extended.

Again. It is asked, 'Should we build churches or chapels for the poor?' I answer, that while I think this mode of operation to be secondary in its claims, and to promise little in comparison with a daily and hourly ministration from house to house, yet as considerable numbers, even of the very poor, may be brought together on

the evenings of Sunday, for social worship and instruction, and a few may be collected for a service in the day, it is therefore well to have small and unexpensive chapels for these services. But if a commodious hall may be obtained, near the centre of the neighborhood of a large number of the poor, I should not advise the erection of a chapel. A very large proportion of the poor, it is to be remembered, frequently change their place of habitation; and the parts of the city to which they remove are often far apart from one another. It will often, therefore, be inconvenient, or impracticable, to continue their connexion with a particular chapel or hall of worship. Many, too, who will go, and be glad to go to an evening service, cannot leave their homes during the day, either because they have young children who demand their care, or because they have not the attire in which they are willing to go abroad. I venture indeed to say, that far less than half of those for whom this ministry is most important, can be gathered for anything like a constant attendance upon the services of a mission-house or chapel. They are, therefore, to be ministered to at home. And as far as any can be induced and enabled regularly to give their attendance upon the religious services of a church on Sunday, it seems to me very desirable that they should be persuaded, as far as may be, to connect themselves with the existing congregations, or religious societies, in the city; while, if it shall be thought best, they may still be in the charge of the minister of the poor who has brought them into this connexion. I would say also, that not more than one public service in the day time should be required of a minister at large on Sunday; because half of the day may be far more profitably ap-

propriated to visiting those who cannot be brought together for public worship, and who are then to be found at home under circumstances the most favorable for religious and moral influence. He may, however, preach on other days, in any room of those whom he visits; and he may have a regular Sunday evening service in his hall or chapel. But, I repeat, let the poor, as far as it can be done, be brought into the congregations of the rich; and there, as our Lord and master intended that they should, let them worship together. There let them send up the mingled incense of united adoration and thanksgivings, of penitential acknowledgments and fervent supplications; and there let them open their hearts to a sense at once of their relation to each other, through their common relation to God, and of their great common interests; of their reciprocal duties, and of the common and infinitely glorious inheritance to which God is calling them. Many may thus be united with our churches, who otherwise would have lived and died unconnected with any of them. Still, however, after all that can be done to bring them into this connexion, there will be many, to whom, if the gospel is to be preached, it must and can be only in the family circle; many, therefore, who will be without the pale of the christian ministry, unless there shall be a ministry exclusively for them.

My reply to the third query, 'Should this ministry be made an instrument for the formation of new religious societies?' is plainly to be inferred from what I have said in my reply to the second. If, indeed, a chapel, or a mission-house for the poor, shall become a centre in which those who can build and support a new house of

worship shall be disposed to form themselves into a new religious society, and to unite themselves with the poor who are collected there, it is well. Let a new religious society then be formed there. But most earnestly should I deprecate any measures, which should have for their end the establishment of congregations, or of religious societies, exclusively of the poor. It is a very important purpose of the ministry for which I plead, to bring the classes of society into a new, and christian union with each other; and it is greatly to be regretted, that our religious societies are constituted as they now are, in respect to the accommodation of any but proprietors in their places of public worship. The poor, who would gladly unite with them, but who cannot pay for the privilege, in the largest number of our places of worship have at best a very narrow space appropriated for them; and there they must sit apart, as 'the class of the poor.' This is a practice not less inconsistent with our political principles, than it is with the spirit of Christianity. Under other governments, where distinctions of rank and of rights are universally recognised, the poor feel themselves to be, and revolt not at being treated, both politically and religiously, as *a caste*. But far otherwise is it under our institutions, for the preservation of which, religious as well as political, no means is more important, than the excitement and maintenance of an interest in them, and an attachment to them, in the mass of the poorer departments of society. Let nothing, then, be done by this ministry, by which the poor shall be made to feel that the very religion, which is intended to be a bond of union between them and their fellow men, is itself an instrument of their separation from the more favored

classes of their fellow beings. The attempt, by any means, to build up and to increase the number of religious societies, composed of those, who, without bringing themselves into great pecuniary embarrassments, and taxing others to uphold them, cannot support a ministry, I deem alike impolitic, and wrong; and if the ministry for the poor shall be employed for this object, I feel assured that by this single circumstance it will be not less exposed to fall into discredit, and to become an utter failure, than it will if it shall be engaged in only as a temporary service, and in preparation for the ministry of our churches.

Having given my judgment upon these questions, I would state a few great principles of operation in the ministry, which I have tested, and have found to be of increasing value in proportion as I have learned how to apply them. This, I think, will be a better service than I could render by any statements of my own modes of action in particular cases.

I observe then, in the first place, that, either for personal happiness in this ministry, or for success in it, we must regard poverty, and the poor, as Jesus Christ regarded them. We must have a love of man, *as man*, like that which glowed in the heart of Jesus. We must recognise in every human being a child of our Father in heaven, and go to our work under the full influence of the sentiment of christian brotherhood, with those whom it may be our privilege to serve as ministers of Christ.

This christian interest in the poor, this affectionate care for them, and this solicitude for their highest improvement and well-being, — for their happiness through

their piety and virtue, — is the first of all requisites, not only for making the proffered services of the minister acceptable, but even in any considerable degree useful. This is, in truth, no other than the principle of a true sympathy with Jesus Christ in the distinctive object of his religion, that, through its influence, the poor are to be blessed; that, through his teaching, and the spirit of his gospel, even the poorest may be made rich by the acquisition of a treasure, which is infinitely more precious than all outward good. This simple and divine principle in the soul of a minister of the poor will inspire the consciousness, that he has himself obtained a better possession, when he has been an instrument of bringing a family, or an individual, under the influences of the gospel of Christ, than if, by any other operation, he had even obtained for himself great riches. It will also be to him for light, where otherwise he would have found himself in the thickest darkness; and for encouragement, where, without it, he would have shrunk from the obstacles which will sometimes beset his path. It will even reveal to him the strength and the weaknesses, the virtues and the vices of those to whom he shall minister. It will suggest to him new modes of action when old ones have failed him, and make him patient with the dull, tender and kind to the feeble and susceptible, as affectionate as he is persevering towards the apparently obdurate, and ever forbearing even towards the most violent opposer. It will gradually soften hearts, which at first appeared to be impenetrable, and call forth in them sentiments of regard, and confidence, and attachment; and it will make him feel, that, in being permitted to minister to the moral recovery and the spiritual advancement

of any, even the meanest of his brethren, who would otherwise have been overlooked, and neglected, and left in ignorance, and recklessness, and sin, for whom yet Christ lived and died, he is one of the most privileged, and ought to be one of the most grateful and devoted, of the children of God in this world. I do not say that no one should make a trial of his capacities for this service, till he shall feel the full extent of this religious interest in the poor, and the most exposed of his fellow-beings. But I think that, if, after a fair trial of the work, he shall not find this sentiment to be daily growing in his heart, he may reasonably conclude that this is not the department of the ministry to which the providence of God has called him.

Again. I adduce it as an elementary principle of this ministry, that we should go to it with a true and strong spirit of sympathy with every one, whom we may be called to address, or with whom we may have to expostulate, *as a sinner*. The first principle to which I have adverted will keep us constantly mindful of the sentiment of our Lord, 'I am among you as one that serveth.' And the second, implying a constant recognition of the fact, 'I, too, am a sinner,' will dispose and prepare us, as we could not otherwise be prepared, gently, kindly, and affectionately to approach our offending brother. This second principle, therefore, in my estimation, is not of less importance than the first. Here we are brought into connexion with those, whose lives have passed under far different influences from our own. We have neither been exposed, as they have been, and were never perhaps inclined to the vices and crimes into which they have fallen. But may not our own sins, in the sight of God,

and under the circumstances in which we committed them, be as great as theirs? I plead for no false sensibility on this subject; for no artificial and assumed feelings; for no self-accusations of sins of which we are innocent. But it is the truth, and a matter of simple truth, that we are ourselves the fellow sinners even of the greatest transgressors. Let a conviction of this truth, then, be ever present to our minds, when we are speaking to others of their sins. It is, indeed, hardly conceivable by those who have not made the experiment, how close is the intimacy which may be formed in this service of mind with mind; and what a free and willing access may be obtained in it even to minds, which spurn the authority of law, and in mockery laugh at, or indignantly resent, every other indication of an attempt to control them. But, for this end, we must identify ourselves with the transgressor, through that sympathy with which nothing short of a strong sense of our own sins can inspire us. Few are so dull that they cannot perceive, though they may not be able to explain, the actings of this principle in the soul of one who addresses them; and few consciences are so dead, as to be wholly insensible to the motives and persuasions which it will suggest and urge, to impress and win the heart of the sinner. Under its influence, the minister of the poor can never be authoritative, harsh, severe, or reproachful in manners, or in language; for even without speaking of himself, yet feeling this principle, he will but press upon the sinner his own deep felt convictions, his own most dearly cherished interests, his own firm purposes, and his own ardent hopes. Every feeling, therefore, of his own sins, and every effort he shall make for the self-improvement to

which the gospel calls him, is an increase of his qualifications for the ministry, in which he would be an instrument of bringing his brother sinner to repentance, and to salvation.

Again. As it is a peculiarity of this ministry, that its objects are to be sought rather through direct personal intercourse, than by preaching, and therefore, that it principally addresses itself immediately to the individual mind, the principle should never be lost sight of that a constant regard is here to be had to the distinctive circumstances, both personal and relative, of every individual to whom it is extended. Allow me then to say, that, in this service, the inquiries should constantly be present to our minds, 'what are here the prevailing principles, dispositions, and tendencies?' 'What are the effects upon the individual of the employment in which he is engaged, and the company with which he associates?' 'What are the influences at home which are conducing to good in him, and what to evil?' What is there in his mind, or heart, which is to be cherished and strengthened, and by the culture and advancement of which the whole character may be improved; and, what is the prejudice there, the passion, or the habit, which it is most desirable, and most important, should immediately be corrected?' Some, even of those who are living most viciously, it will be found were religiously educated, and will not have forgotten the care with which they were reared, and the hopes which were indulged of them. This is a circumstance which may be of great importance to the objects of a religious teacher; for of those who have been recovered from gross vice, I believe that nineteen out of twenty will be found to have receiv-

ed early religious instruction; and that their reformation, under God, is principally to be ascribed to the revived influence of this instruction. Some, also, have been reared from infancy in an atmosphere of sin, and have never received a strong impression of a religious principle, or had a strong sense of a religious obligation. Still they may not be, and in truth they are not wholly without natural conscience; and the skill of the teacher is to be exerted upon this conscience, in awakening its almost deadened capacities. Some were early accustomed to a condition of at least comparative prosperity, and others have never known any other than a life of poverty. Having then obtained as perfect a knowledge as he can of all within, and without, which is conducing to the virtue or vice of the individual, the teacher will understand something of the nature of the work which he will have to do; of the objects to which he is particularly to direct his attention and cares; and, of the means he is to employ to attain these objects. And though, after all that he may thus have learned, his success may be far short of his hopes, he will, yet, to the extent to which his influence shall be felt, and to which the individual shall be brought to co-operate with him, have the satisfaction to know that he is working for a radical, and a permanent reformation.

I would state another principle which is constantly to be cherished and maintained in this ministry. I mean, that we should be careful to carry into it a deep feeling of respect for the actual rights and capacities of the individual mind. I do not indeed suppose that this principle is of greater importance here, than in any other department of the christian ministry. But here, more

easily perhaps than in the ministry of our churches, we may lose sight of it. What, indeed, it may be asked by some, are the rights, which belong to a condition of ignorance, and dependence, and degradation, and sin? And, what is the respect which is due to him, who has no respect for himself? I reply, that the capacities and rights of an immortal nature, of a being who must account for himself to God, and in whom the objects of the gospel of Christ can be accomplished only by his own free choice of truth and virtue, and duty, have the highest claims to the respect of a religious teacher, even in the most wayward and debased of our fellow men. For how is it, but through his capacities and rights of thought and understanding, of judgment and affection, of choice and of will, that any one is, or can be, a subject of the moral government of God, and accountable to him? It is a new world of interests, and as distinct a course of action into which we are brought in our intercourse with our fellow-beings, by christian sentiments on this single subject respecting them. Our own use of these rights, and our improvement of these capacities, may, perhaps, have raised us, in our moral condition, above some poor, degraded fellow-beings, even more than we are raised above them by the circumstances of our outward condition. But enfeebled as these powers may be in them, and perverted, and corrupted, they are not wholly lost; for if they were, the individuals would not be proper subjects of the christian ministry. A man may be regardless of his capacities and rights, and unconscious of their importance and worth, and of the responsibility which they bring upon him; and it may even be the high office of the minister into whose charge he may fall, to

reveal this individual to himself. And what an exalted ministry is that, in which we are called to bring home to any soul a conception which it never had, of the capacities with which God has endowed it; of the certainty which has been unfelt, of an immortal existence; and of the necessary connexion of human happiness, and misery, with its freely formed habits, and its chosen moral condition! And does God himself, — I ask with reverence, — act upon the human mind, or heart, for its conversion, or restoration, independently of the free exercise of those capacities, by which he has constituted us moral and accountable agents? How then shall man be made an instrument of the salvation of his fallen brother, if he respect not in him those powers and rights, which are the essential constituents of the soul that is to be redeemed? Is it still asked, how may we aid the poor, manacled and fettered spirit, to regain its freedom? How may we awaken in him a sense, and fasten upon him a conviction, of the greatness and excellence of the capacities which he has given over to sin? How shall we teach him, and help him to feel that he has power, and that he must use it, to return to God; and that if he will seek, because he truly wants it, God will not withhold the assistance he needs to break his chains and to recover his liberty? I can only answer, that, as far as human agency may be effectual in this work, he, I believe, will possess the best light, and will labor with the best success, who, under the guiding influence of the instructions and example of our Lord, shall always, and in everything, most carefully maintain the respect which is due to these capacities and essential principles of human nature, which our heavenly Father himself respects in all his deal-

ings with man as a moral being. And he, I think, will most faithfully regard these capacities and principles of our common nature in others who is most strongly impressed with their importance and worth in himself, and with his own accountableness for the use which he shall make of them. If any one have not a consciousness in what consists the essential worth of the rights and powers of his own moral, accountable and immortal nature, I know of no rules which aid him in awakening this consciousness in the soul of another.

It is another principle, which should never be forgotten in this ministry, that human nature, or, to speak more definitely, a fellow sinner, — is never to be given up, as if he were either beyond the pale of God's mercy, or of human hope, and charity, and labor. I give a prominence also to this principle, because in this ministry, far more than we should be in that of our churches, we are called to a frequent and intimate communication with obdurate and reckless offenders; and because here, therefore, unless we are strongly impressed with it, we shall not only find our own energies daily enfeebled by new discouragements, but we shall be disregarding one of the highest, and most glorious of the objects of Christianity, and of the ministry it has instituted, the salvation of *the lost*. Here, it may be, that from day to day we shall be brought into the society of the confirmedly intemperate, into whose very bones and marrow, and every thought and affection, the chains of the appetite which has enslaved them seem not only to have grown, but to have become identical with the very principle of their existence. But are they, therefore, to be overlooked, as no longer subjects of the moral government of God? Even if all expedients which have

yet been tried shall have failed, are there no new expedients which christian benevolence can devise for their recovery? Would he who came to seek and to save that which was lost, pass them uncared for, while God continues to them any use of their reasoning powers, or while any principles of their moral nature are still living in their hearts. Here, too, we shall meet the equally perverted, who have reasoned themselves, as far as they could, out of all principle, and into a justification of every sin, to which passion may prompt, or desperation may drive them. And here must be met those, who have fallen into that deepest of the abysses of human iniquity, that foulest and most corrupting of sins, that sin which extends the deepest and deadliest of moral poisons into the soul, and of all sins seems most completely to deprave and deaden every faculty of the moral nature; I mean, the sin of licentiousness; of profligacy. But, is even the profligate to be given up? I have seen the human soul, and have been called to minister to it, in some at least of the most painful varieties of debasement into which it is brought by violations of conscience, and of God's will. And I have seen, that, even where the moral nature seemed to be dead, utterly dead, it is very possible, by feeling long and patiently about the heart, that some pulsation may be found there to indicate, or even to prove, that the principle of moral life, and the capacity of moral feeling, are not, in truth, wholly extinct. While God, then, shall continue life, shall we not continue our efforts, and our prayers, as the ministers of his mercy? Besides, even if, in regard to many, we must, to carry out the rule that human nature is never to be given up, hope against hope, and labor without making even the smallest appa-

rent progress, still, if we shall persevere, some occasion may be given in the providence of God, in which a way will be opened for us that we thought not of; and in which a success, to call forth our eternal gratitude and praise, will follow our cares, our prayers, and our exertions. Would, indeed, that I had a warning voice, by which I could carry home to every soul, especially of the young, a conviction of the extent and fearfulness of the desolations to which the human soul may be, and is brought, by abandonment to intemperance, to falsehood and dishonesty, or to a life of profligacy! I can hardly conceive of the degradation, and the misery, which I have not witnessed, as the consequences and the wages of these sins. And I have seen many, very many, who, having resisted all reasonings, and all persuasions, have gone, — into eternity, moral suicides, to stand before their Judge in the fulness of their unrepented sins. But I would still repeat, let human nature, let a fellow sinner never be given up. Let a minister of Christ never be weary, and never discouraged with a transgressor, even though all the world beside should forsake, and give him up as hopeless. I have seen that there may be at least an apparently real restoration, even in a case apparently as desperate as any one to which the moral nature may be brought; and I have seen those recovered to temperance, and faithfully maintaining it, who were once broken down, the scourge and misery of their families, and were threatened with premature death, by their habitual and lawless excesses. To God, then, let us look in every step of our way, seeking his guidance and aid; remembering our own dependence on mercy, and exercising the mercy, which, could we imagine ourselves to be in the

condition of our fallen brother, we could wish should then be extended to ourselves. This is plainly the rule of the gospel, and it should never be forgotten by a minister of the poor.

I might state other principles, which have, I think, a peculiar bearing upon this ministry. But I forbear. I must however observe, that I do not forget that here, at least as much as in any other department of the administration of our religion, we need the light and power which God only can communicate ; the influences of his spirit; and that here, too, if any one is an instrument of good to a fellow-being, to God we are to ascribe the success, and to him we are to render the glory. I know not, indeed, the sphere of human action, in which human need of divine aid is more impressively taught, than in the services of this ministry. Strangely constituted must be that mind, which, amidst the spectacles that are here daily witnessed, at once of human weakness, and exposure, and want, and suffering, and of the power of human propensities and habits, and amidst the embarrassments and trials which are here daily to be met, shall not often and strongly feel its personal insufficiency for the objects, for the attainment of which the gospel yet calls for human interest, sympathy, and co-operation. But, blessed be God, this very gospel assures us, that he will not withhold his holy spirit from those who ask him for it. This is the first and the last, the beginning and the end, of the encouragements to this ministry; nor can I conceive that any one who should attempt this service, independently of this divine aid, would long obtain the remunerations of his work, which would induce him to continue in it.

But while I plead for a special ministry for the poor, I am fully aware that our religion knows of no substitute, and that its believers should not think of proposing any, for that extended and personal connexion between the wise and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, the virtuous and the vicious, at which our Lord aims in the sentiment addressed to them without discrimination, *All ye are brethren.* No one, indeed, I think, who has watched the operations of this ministry, can doubt whether it have done much in our city, to quicken and extend a sense of the relations into which Christianity would bring the classes of society with each other. And let me here observe, that something will also, I hope, be done in this cause by the publication of Degerando's 'Visitor of the Poor.' I commend this work to the readers of my Reports, in the belief that it is suited to do much to make the service to which it calls its readers profitable at once to those who may engage in it, and to those to whom this service may be extended.

The past winter, it will be remembered, was one of unusual severity. It was also a season of unusual sickness. But although there was a proportionably unusual demand for fuel, and although its price was one third higher than in several preceding winters, there yet was not, I think. any unusual suffering among the poor, from a want of the means of warmth and comfort. The cold weather of the winter began very early, and public sympathy with the suffering was strongly excited among us. The rich were liberal in their contributions for the necessitous, and the distributors of their bounty were faithful in the appropriation of it. Much moral evil, I believe, was thus pre-

vented, and much moral, as well as physical good, was promoted. There are, without doubt, cases of an unwise and injurious distribution of alms among us. But I believe there is as little ground for complaint, or for apprehension on this subject, in our city, as in any city of equal numbers, in our country, or in the world.

Of my own services during the last six months, I can only say, that I have endeavored to do what I could. At the close of the last December I was taken from my work by a dangerous illness, which confined me to my house for five weeks; and I have recently been absent from the city for eight days. My visits, therefore, for the last half year, have been but thirteen hundred and twenty one, and these have been divided between four hundred and fifteen families. I have been obliged also, from inability to preach, wholly to relinquish the services of the chapel. A recurrence to this last circumstance, and to the fact, that twice during the last year, I have been admonished by sudden and severe illness of the tenure by which I hold my life in this world, constrains me to urge again my strong desire, that some one should take my place in this ministry, to whom I may act as an assistant from house to house, and on whom may devolve the whole duties of the chapel. Not only would my life be rendered far happier, could I pass the remnant of it in this relation with one who could bear the full heat and burden of the day, but with far greater happiness should I then look to its close. 'But all is in His hands, whose praise we seek.' Six, besides myself, are now employed wholly as ministers of the poor in this city; and not less active than either of us in this field of duty, is Mr. Taylor, the seamen's preacher and friend. We have good reason there-

fore to believe, that this ministry will be one of our permanent institutions. It has conduced to very great good; and, if fit instruments shall be obtained for it, and it shall be wisely conducted, it will never want either public approbation, or patronage. May the Lord of the harvest raise up for us, and send forth, new, and more efficient laborers, into this department of his harvest!

Respectfully,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

Boston, May 5, 1832.

1st Series. No. 61.

THE

REPORTS

OF THE AMERICAN

UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

PRESENTED AT THE

SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY,

MAY 29, 1832.

WITH AN APPENDIX.

BOSTON:
GRAY AND BOWEN, 141 WASHINGTON STREET.
JULY, 1832.

Price 6 Cents.

PRINTED BY I. R. BUTTS.....BOSTON.

SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY.

THE American Unitarian Association celebrated their seventh anniversary on Tuesday evening, May 29, 1832. The meeting for business was held in the Berry-street Vestry, at half past six o'clock, the President, Dr Bancroft, in the chair.

The record of the last anniversary was read. The Treasurer's Statement of the Receipts and Expenditures of the past year was then read and accepted.

BOSTON, MAY 29, 1832.

To the Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association.

GENTLEMEN — I herewith present my Annual Account as Treasurer of the Association, with a statement of the Receipts and Expenditures from May 24, 1831, to this date.

Of the amount in the Treasury $273,38 is an unexpended balance of the fund for the support of the Domestic Mission, under the care of the Rev. Dr Tuckerman, and $176,33 belongs to the funds of the Association.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

HENRY RICE.

Statement of Receipts and Expenditures of the American Unitarian Association, from May 24, 1831, to May 29, 1832.

RECEIPTS.

Balance in the Treasury May 24, 1831, - -		$729 78
From Annual Subscribers, - - -	321	
" two Life " - - -	60	
" Auxiliary Associations, - -	1199 43	
Donations, - - - - - - -	28 68	
For sales of Tracts, - - - -	808 41	
Subscriptions and Donations for the support of a Minister at Large in the city of Boston, - - - - - -	573 50*	
From Boston Sunday School Society, amount loaned in February and March, 1829, - - - - - -	300	
Interest allowed by the Treasurer, -	39 64	
		3330 66
		$4060 44

* This amount was received from

The Ladies of Federal Street Church, -	$188
" of New South " - -	173 50
" of Brattle Street " - -	100
" of West " - -	71
" of First " - -	39
A Friend in Lowell, - - - - -	2
	$573 50

P. S. After the above account was examined by the Auditors, the following sums were received for the support of the Domestic Mission, being subscriptions for the last year; and will appear in the next annual account.

From the Ladies of King's Chapel Society, - - -	$100
" " the Twelfth Congregational Church,	50
" " Purchase Street "	48 50
	$198 50

EXPENDITURES.

Donation to the Unitarian Society in Farmington, Me.,	25	
" to the First Ecclesiastical Society in Brooklyn, Conn.,	50	
Paid Rev. Seth E. Winslow, for preaching in Vermont,	50	
" do. do. in Maine,	100	
" Rev. William L. Stearns, for preaching in Penobscot County, Me.,	30	
" Mr Francis Cunningham, for preaching in Hartford, Conn.,	20	
" Rev. Addison Brown, for preaching in Troy, N. Y.,	50	
" Rev. Isaac B. Pierce, for preaching in Trenton, N. Y.	22	
" Rev. Andrew Bigelow, for services and expenses as Agent of the Association,	80	
" For printing and binding Tracts, and for Paper,	2036 65	
" sundry Incidental Expenses, as per account current,	44 08	
" Gray & Bowen, one year's salary as General Agents,	300	
" Rev. Dr Tuckerman, one year's salary, as Minister at Large in the city of Boston, $600; additional grant, $200,	800	
		3,610 73
		$449 71

HENRY RICE, *Treasurer.*

Boston, May 29, 1832.

Boston, May 28, 1832. The undersigned have examined the foregoing accounts, and find them correctly cast and properly vouched, and that the balance now in the hands of the Treasurer is four hundred and fortynine dollars and seventyone cents.

(*Signed*) Harrison Gray, Thomas Tarbell, } *Auditors.*

Rev. George Putnam, of Roxbury, and Rev. Horatio Alger, of Chelsea, were appointed to collect and count the votes. The Officers of the past year were re-elected, with the addition of Hon. William Sullivan, chosen one of the Vice Presidents. [The list of Officers will be found in the Appendix.]

The Association then adjourned to meet in the Congregational Church in Federal-street.

The public meeting in the church was opened at seven o'clock. After a voluntary on the organ, prayers were offered by Rev. Dr Harris, of Dorchester. The Report of the Domestic Secretary was then read.

SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

ON DOMESTIC AFFAIRS.

The Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association, in presenting their Seventh Annual Report, would, with devout gratitude, recognise the hand of a kind Providence in the unusual measure of success which has attended their labors during the past year; a year, it will be remembered, of great commotion and excitement as well in the religious as the political world. They proceed to give some account of these labors, which they trust will show that this extraordinary religious excitement has been met by a corresponding zeal and activity on the part of this Association; and that it has done something, more we think than in any previous year, to diffuse just and scriptural views of religion, and to sow through the land the seeds of an enlightened piety, an enlarged charity, and an exalted and generous virtue.

The most efficient and useful instrument of the Association, thus far, has been the publication of Tracts explaining the views and urging the principles of pure Christianity. At the time when this Association was formed, in the year 1825, there were but few plain and popular expositions of our distinctive opinions. There were, it is true, several admirable vindications of the Unitarian faith, in which its claims were set forth with great power and learning; but they were large, expensive, and rare, and consequently

did not obtain that wide and general circulation which they deserved. Other smaller treatises, whose titles we need not specify, were more brief and cheap, and easily obtained; but then they labored under the defect of not being perfectly level and obvious to common minds. Written as they were by professed scholars and theologians, they seemed to imply and require in the reader a familiarity with the general history and argument of the controversy, which none but they who have made it their particular study, can be supposed to possess. They were admirably adapted to thinking, intelligent, well-informed minds; but were not sufficiently plain and elementary for the unlearned and humble inquirer. Considering the persons for whom they were designed, they were perfect in their kind, calm, lucid, logical. But to the mass of the people, to those who were asking, May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is? they were not acceptable. They shot over their heads, instead of striking at their understandings and their hearts. Tracts of a different character were needed — certainly not less able, nor written by inferior minds — but more simple, and earnest, coming directly to the point, and throwing light upon the dark and dubious topics of controversial theology. A class of writings was wanted, which, deriving their arguments for Unitarian Christianity from the Bible, should show its harmony with reason, and establish its authority by evidence so plain that every one could comprehend it, so close that no one could evade it, and withal set forth in language so persuasive, and in a manner so devout and fervent, that prejudice might be disarmed, and the favor even of opposers be conciliated.

This, every one will allow, was a difficult and delicate

task, not to be accomplished instantaneously, but by patient and persevering effort. The Executive Committee of this Association, convinced of the importance and necessity of the work, have for seven years been laboring to effect it. They have done all in their power to procure to be written and circulated through the country, tracts of the character above described. And though they are fully sensible of the deficiencies and chasms which yet remain to be filled up in this department, yet they feel that they may congratulate the Association on the many excellent pamphlets both doctrinal and practical, being 86 in number, which have been printed under its sanction.

It will be seen by looking at the catalogue of these tracts, appended to this Report, that there is a good variety in their subjects. A prominent object, of course, was to vindicate and recommend the neglected doctrine of the simple unity of God; and accordingly we find a good proportion of the tracts bearing directly on that point. Others are designed to relieve the moral character of the Deity from the unjust reproaches cast upon it by the popular theology; and others again, are on the important topics of man's nature and moral condition. It will be seen, too, that the evidences of our common faith, the criticism of the New Testament, the ordinances of the gospel, the nature of true religion, with its various graces, duties and virtues, have not been forgotten or omitted in this comprehensive plan.

Since the last Anniversary 13 new tracts have been printed, 12 of the first series, and 1 of the second, amounting to 47,000 copies. Within the same period 34 tracts have been reprinted, amounting to 80,000 copies; making a total of 127,000 copies printed within the last twelve months, and

more than three millions of pages. The whole number of copies printed the year previous was 72,500, thus showing an increase during the past year of 54,500. For these tracts there has been an unexampled and constantly increasing demand from all parts of the country. The account of the General Agents shows that, without including the supply of the Auxiliaries, tracts have been sold to the amount of $808,41. The copies now remaining on the shelves will be soon taken up by the numerous Auxiliaries recently formed or now in the course of formation. These tracts have not been distributed solely in Massachusetts or New England. They have gone all over the land, from Eastport to New Orleans and the extremest West, and we trust have shed light into many a darkened and doubting mind, and imparted peace and comfort to many an anxious and desponding heart.

Some persons, we are aware, are disposed to regard the printing and distribution of tracts as a small business, an insignificant affair — as a measure that promises little good, and can produce but little effect. Your Committee, after the experience which seven years have afforded them, have come to a different conclusion, and are satisfied that great good may be done, and has been done in this way. It should be remembered, that in many places these tracts furnish the only medium by which individuals can become acquainted with what we deem correct views of religion. This is particularly the case in the newly and thinly settled parts of the country, but it is true, in a degree, of the country universally. Throughout the land a spirit of religious inquiry has recently been awakened, such as never existed before. Everywhere, scattered individuals, dissatisfied with the doctrines of the prevalent

theology, are asking for a purer and better faith. How shall they obtain it? They cannot hear it proclaimed from the lips of the living teacher. They are not sufficiently numerous or strong to maintain a preacher, nor are there at present Unitarian ministers enough to supply the vast and growing wants of the country. What, then, shall they do? They must *read*. The printed tract must take the place of the living teacher. These little, silent, unpretending messengers of truth must be despatched to the remotest parts of our country; they must go abroad over the whole face of the land, traverse river and valley, and bear the glad tidings of good to the scattered dwellers beyond the mountains, to enlighten their minds, to warm and invigorate their piety, to cheer and gladden their hearts. The new settler may read them to his family in his log house on the Sabbath, when he is far beyond the sound of the church-going bell, and is debarred from the privilege of walking in company to the house of God with those who keep holy time, and worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

A very efficient auxiliary to this Association in the circulation of its tracts has been found in the 'Unitarian Book and Pamphlet Society,' which was formed in this city in the year 1827 for the gratuitous distribution of Unitarian publications of an approved character. For five years it has gone on silently and unobtrusively in its good work, not forcing its tracts impertinently upon any one, but keeping its Depository well stored at all times for any who may wish to receive them. As might be expected, the calls upon it are frequent, and the Society has been gradually enlarging its resources, and extending its operations. During the last year it has distributed pamphlets to the amount of $115,85, and 4000 in number. The

whole number of tracts purchased and distributed since its formation is 25,000, the cost of which has been between 8 and 900 dollars. The number of its members is now 150, principally young men. It ought to be much larger, and as the term of membership is a subscription of but one dollar, we recommend to the friends of religious truth to enrol their names on its list of subscribers. It behooves us all, in this and in every other fair and honorable way, to be ready to distribute, willing to communicate of the good word of faith, 'the truth as it is in Jesus.'

The ministry at large for the poor of Boston, established under the direction of the Executive Committee, and supported by the annual subscriptions of ladies belonging to the several Unitarian congregations in the city, has been found during the past, as well as in previous years, to be a great blessing to those for whose moral and spiritual improvement it was instituted; and it has in various incidental ways proved the instrument of much good. The Semiannual Reports of Dr Tuckerman have not only attracted unusual attention in this community to the general subject of pauperism, and impressed a deep sense of the religious wants of the poor, and of the duties of the more favored classes in relation to them, but have led to the adoption of specific measures in reference to that very important and interesting class, the exposed children and youth of the city. It is gratifying also to learn that the success of this experiment in preaching the gospel to the poor has excited considerable interest elsewhere, and in some places led to the adoption of a similar plan for their religious instruction.*

* The reader is referred to the Report of the Foreign Secretary for an account of the appointment of a City Missionary in London.

In the city of New York, an attempt has been made by one of the Unitarian ministers to excite an interest in this subject. By his influence the eight Reports of Dr Tuckerman have been reprinted, and circulated gratis. No movement however has yet been made to establish a minister at large. It is confidently hoped that ere long the apathy of that great city will be disturbed, a city where such a ministry as this is peculiarly needed, and where, if entrusted to proper hands, it would be productive of the most beneficial results.

In his last Report, which has just issued from the press, Dr Tuckerman states that during the last half year his visits have been 1321, which have been divided among 415 families. 'Six, besides myself,' he tells us, 'are now employed wholly as ministers of the poor in this city; and not less active than either of us in this field of duty, is Mr Taylor, the seamen's preacher and friend. We have good reason therefore to believe that this ministry will be one of our permanent institutions. It has conduced to very great good; and if fit instruments shall be obtained for it, and it shall be wisely conducted, it will never want either public approbation or patronage.'

During the past year some small appropriations have been made for the support of Unitarian preaching in Maine, Connecticut, and New York. A much larger sum might have been advantageously expended, had it been at the disposal of the Committee. Numerous applications have been made for ministers which, from the low state of the funds, have been reluctantly declined. It is hoped that in the course of another year the Association may be supplied with the means of sending forth more living teachers. The few whom we have em-

ployed have labored principally in the state of Maine, which now seems to be fully prepared for the reception of correct views of religion. To adopt the language of a correspondent, 'The wants of this region are great. The call is urgent. They want to hear — they want to read. There is a great desire to hear our views. An impression may be produced by a single discourse; but tracts are necessary to continue and carry on the good work. The time, I trust, is not far distant, when societies will be springing up all through this region.' It deserves to be mentioned in this connexion that the Unitarian Monitor, published once a fortnight at Dover, N. H. has contributed much to diffuse just religious principles through the states of Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire.

In Connecticut, too, where truth has had to contend with long-established and deep-rooted prejudices, the prospect is every day becoming more encouraging. Meetings recently held in several places in that state for the free and full discussion of disputed opinions, have excited a spirit of inquiry, and it is expected will be followed by the happiest results. A new paper, entitled the Christian Monitor, lately established at Brooklyn, and edited by the Rev. Mr May, promises to be an efficient instrument in the cause of truth and righteousness. In Newport, Rhode Island, the simple and rational views of pure Christianity were inculcated last summer, in the second Congregational church by the Rev. Dr Channing; and more recently a Unitarian Society has been formed at Fall River, on the borders of the same state. In Brattleboro', Vermont, the brethren who hold the like precious faith with us, have erected a church during the

past year, and invited a pastor, who will be ordained in the course of the next month.

The scattered churches that hold the simple doctrine of Evangelical Unitarianism in the more remote parts of the country have been growing in numbers, and we trust in grace and godliness, during the last year. The church in Augusta, Georgia, after a year's suspension of his labors, enjoys once more the presence and services of its pastor. In the region of the great West, that land of plenty and of promise, the state of things is encouraging. At Cincinnati and Louisville, two of the most important points in that section of the country, we now have societies and churches; and the Rev. Messrs Parkman and Walker are now on a tour to the West, for the purpose of ordaining a minister at the former place and dedicating a meeting-house at the latter. In Pennsylvania, besides the flourishing church in Philadelphia, the towns of Pittsburg, Meadville, and Northumberland, have enjoyed the stated services of Unitarian preachers throughout the year. A very valuable publication, entitled the Unitarian Essayist, is issued periodically at Meadville. In the state of New York, new societies have been formed at Buffalo and Troy, the former of which is now building a church. The new society at Fishkill, on the North river, has been supplied with Unitarian preaching. The society in Ogdensburg, has been prospered beyond all expectation; they have engaged a minister for the coming year, and propose, if they obtain some assistance from abroad, to proceed to the erection of a meeting-house.

The attention of your Committee has frequently been called to the western part of the state of New York. They have been led to regard it as one of the best fields for the

introduction and diffusion of pure Christianity; and nothing but the want of funds has prevented them from sending preachers into that region. In confirmation of their views and impressions they beg leave to quote from a Report made to them by a person in their service, who visited that state during the last fall. 'The result of my observations,' he says, and of the information I have been able to collect, is that the whole of the western part of the state of New York is a promising field for the labors of Unitarian missionaries. The present, too, is of all others, the most favorable time to enter upon it. The revival that has gone through the country, has eminently prepared the way. The awakened attention of the multitude, unless it can be directed to something rational, consistent and solid, will subside into a disregard to all religion. Under these circumstances let faithful and affectionate teachers be sent to them, who shall look them up, and kindly take them by the hand, and show them from the Bible what is honorable to God; what is adapted to the powers, the hopes, the destinies of their own nature; what is rational, what is conducive to virtue, and what will abide the trial of the judgment. To such teachers they will listen; and such teachers will soon find around them those who will support them, and provide them houses of worship, and hold up their hands, and comfort their hearts, while ministering in them. In my opinion there is now a fair demand for ten or twelve missionaries in the western part of the state of New York. In the same of the towns and counties and districts above mentioned, permit me to solicit in their behalf this number of preachers, with commissions from the American Unitarian Association, and accountable to them.'

For some time past your Committee has been painfully impressed with the apprehension that this Association was not accomplishing all the good which it might and ought to accomplish; that it was not exerting that wide and powerful influence to which, from its name and the character of its members it was fairly entitled. It was thought that the time had come when it should act more efficiently and extensively; — that our prominent situation in the religious world, our superior advantages, the rapid growth of the country, the peculiar state of the times, the progress of infidelity, and the prevalence of fanaticism, all demanded that the Unitarians of America should do more than they had ever yet done to make their sentiments, known, and to diffuse more widely the principles of a faith which needs only to be known, in order to be embraced, venerated and loved. Acting from these convictions the Committee resolved to call a special meeting for the purpose of bringing forward and enforcing the above considerations, and of consulting whether any, and if any, what additional exertions in behalf of Unitarian Christianity are required at the present time.

This meeting was held on the evening of the 19th of last March at the Athenæum in this city. The Legislature being then in session a large and respectable assembly of gentlemen from various parts of the Commonwealth was convened. The views and considerations above mentioned were presented by one of the Executive Committee, who offered two resolutions, to this effect; first, that there is a call upon this Association for increased exertions; secondly, that something should be done to secure the appointment of a permanent Agent.

These resolutions led to a very spirited discussion, in

which the progress and present state, the prospects and claims of Unitarian Christianity were set forth with great clearness and power. There seemed to be but one feeling pervading the assembly, and that was that something might be done, and should be done, to advance the great and good cause in which we are engaged — the cause of christian truth and christian virtue. The first resolution was adopted unanimously and the second was referred to a select Committee, consisting of the Executive Committee and three other gentlemen, to take the whole subject into consideration, and report at an adjourned meeting.

At the adjourned meeting held on the evening of Friday, the 23d of March, at the same place, the Committee made their report, the substance of which was this; first, that it is expedient that every Unitarian Society in the country should be immediately requested by a Circular to form an Auxiliary Association, and report their proceedings before the present Anniversary; secondly, that measures be taken to secure the appointment, and provide for the support of a permanent Agent, of high intellectual and moral qualifications, whose time and talents shall be devoted to the service of the Association.

In the discharge of the duty thus imposed on them the Committee immediately issued the Circular; and it now affords them great pleasure to state that it has almost universally been favorably received, and in very numerous instances been promptly and effectively complied with. The success of the measure has exceeded the expectations of the Committee, and given them new confidence in the spirit and energy of the friends of Liberal Christianity. In order to forward and expedite the business, it was

deemed advisable to employ temporary agents for the purpose of visiting particular places, and aiding in the formation of Auxiliaries. Two such agents were appointed, only one of whom however accepted the appointment. The Rev. Andrew Bigelow, of Medford, has for the last five weeks been acting in this capacity, and has manifested an activity and perseverance that entitle him to the thanks of the Association. In three successive journeys, he visited 54 towns, in almost all of which he established Auxiliaries, or formed a nucleus around which they may hereafter be gathered. By means of the Circular and the labors of the Agent 58 new Auxiliaries have been formed. From 46 of these official reports have been received, and it is believed that there are many more of which no account has yet reached us.

The Executive Committee feel greatly encouraged by the promptitude and cordiality with which their proposal was met; and while they feel grateful to those ministers and congregations who have thus come forward to strengthen their hands and encourage their hearts, they ask leave to express the hope that the good work will go on, and that an efficient Auxiliary may ere long be established in every one of those societies which have not yet moved in the matter. This is the only mode by which funds can be obtained to render the institution extensively useful. They would beg permission to suggest that those who can afford it, should not limit their subscription to the mere minimum of one dollar. It should be remembered that a very large portion of the subscription money is returned in the shape of tracts, and that the list of subscribers at one dollar each must be very large, with that deduction, to produce anything considerable. There are

many doubtless among us who might easily contribute 5, 10 or 20 dollars annually to the funds of this Association. They would also remind the members that by paying 30 dollars at once they may become members for life. The ministers of many of our churches have been constituted life-members by the ladies of their congregations, and were this custom universally followed, a very important addition might be made to our funds.

The other great object contemplated by the Committee, was the appointment and support of a permanent Agent. This has now become almost indispensable. The operations of the Association are so great and various as to demand the whole time and the unintermitted attention and care of a superintendent. Your Committee conceive that the officer in question should be a man of the highest intellectual and moral qualifications, one that would command respect everywhere by his talents and worth, and unite sound judgment and discretion with an earnest and fervid zeal in the cause of truth and righteousness. Such a man they believe would do great good. He might visit occasionally all parts of our Zion, 'confirming the churches, and strengthening the things which remain and that are ready to die.' His personal character and talents might do much for the advancement of christian truth and holiness. In many places, especially in the more remote and retired districts, the mere presence of such a man, the authorized agent of this Association, his very countenance and voice, would be hailed as a cheering and blessed thing. We trust that ere long the funds of the Association will be so increased as to enable your Committee to command the services of whatever man among us is the best qualified for the office, and

to pay him a salary equal to that paid in any of our churches. We want the very best man that can be found, and in order to obtain him, we must have the means to support him.

During the past year several of the Auxiliaries of this Association have held public meetings to excite one another to new efforts in the promotion of pure and undefiled religion. Meetings of this kind have been held at Hingham, Cambridge, Danvers, Providence, and Worcester. The Auxiliaries in the two last places have resolved to hold semi-annual meetings, and the Providence Auxiliary has printed the Report presented at its last meeting. Your Committee regard these public meetings of Auxiliaries as very useful, particularly in County towns and other large places. They serve to excite and keep alive an interest in the object; and it has been found by experience that without something of the kind there is great danger that Auxiliaries will languish and die. These meetings will have a tendency to encourage the friends of religious freedom and pure Christianity to be faithful to themselves, and to the good cause, and to make them feel that it is a cause well worth any sacrifice which they may make. We trust that, as year after year comes round, we shall find these meetings multiplying through the Commonwealth and through the country, and that they will form one of the most efficient means of awakening a greater interest in the objects of the Association. At all such meetings it is respectfully suggested that a collection be taken to replenish the treasury of the parent institution.

It was observed in the beginning of this Report that

the past year had been a season of great religious excitement. It is believed that this is true of the country generally; it has certainly been the case throughout New England. Measures of a novel and extraordinary character have been resorted to, which seem to have been regarded by the people in many parts of the Commonwealth, (to use the language of Dr Chauncey,) as 'things of a bad and dangerous tendency;' and in several parishes they have manifested their disapprobation by dismissing their ministers, and inviting among them the teachers of Unitarian Christianity. In illustration of the state of feeling that prevails in many parts of the country, we give the following extract of a letter lately received from an intelligent layman in the county of Worcester.

'In this region,' the writer observes, 'a change of sentiment is constantly taking place. Unitarian Christianity is rapidly increasing in this county. And it is increasing, too, not because there is an external pressure that forces public sentiment into an unnatural channel; not because men flee to this out of hatred to Orthodoxy; not because it is a choice of evils; but because men begin to learn that Unitarianism is of itself a great good; because it increases the happiness, the prosperity, the moral excellence and elevation of the community; more still, because men learn and feel that this faith prepares them more and better than any other, for the full enjoyment of a never-ending existence; for heaven and Christ, and God. Men begin to feel that their minds may be elevated, that their aspirations of praise may rise purely to the throne of the Omnipotent, that their affections may be purified, and that they can have right feelings towards their fellow-men and Christ and God, without passing

through that all-dissolving crucible, a modern revival. The protracted meetings the last season, have, in my humble judgment, done more for our faith than we could have done in the same time by our most strenuous exertions.'

From the review that has now been taken of the operations of the Society during the past year, the Committee feel that they are authorized to congratulate its members on the present prosperous state of the institution, and upon the encouraging prospects before us. The unexampled demand for our publications, the success which has attended the late appeal to the Unitarian body, and the favorable disposition with which our views are regarded and received by the people not only in our Commonwealth, but throughout New England, and everywhere else where they are proclaimed—these are the facts which we would adduce as the grounds of our rejoicing. We rejoice then in these things. We rejoice in them not as showing the increase of a sect or party, but as indicating the prevalence and diffusion of higher and better views of religion. We do not rejoice as for the triumph of some novel doctrine. No, our faith is no new thing. It is as old as the gospel. We hold it to be the primitive faith, the very word of truth, that in the beginning was preached by Jesus. We hold it to be 'the faith once delivered to the saints' — the faith of the Evangelists and the Apostles — the faith of the three first centuries — the faith that was sealed by the blood of martyrs and attested by the voice of ages. We avow and defend it not from a love of controversy, nor from an attachment to a distinctive name. We love our views of religion not be-

cause they are Unitarianism, but because they are Christianity — Christianity in a simpler and purer form than can be found in any other system. We do not deny that others hold the truth — we trust they do — we believe they do. But then they hold it, as we conceive, mixed with and adulterated by error; and this error, so far as it is really comprehended and embraced, counteracts or neutralizes the effect of the truth. We love Unitarian Christianity, because it is 'a doctrine according to godliness' — because it is eminently adapted to make men heavenly minded, spiritual and holy. We know that it is often represented as a system of bare negations. To us it is full of positive, cheering, life-giving truths. It makes men holy and happy here, and it prepares them for a blessed hereafter. We believe it on the authority of Scripture, and we believe it too 'for its very works' sake.' We love it for the good it has done in the world. We thank God that it gives us joy and hope in believing, and speaks comfort and peace to our hearts. We cling to it as our best support in trial and affliction; it is the anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast. We feel that all we can do in the vindication and diffusion of such a religion falls infinitely short of its worth and its claims. For all the proofs we have of its extension and triumph, we thank God, and give unto him the glory; and in all the hopes we are permitted to cherish of its final and universal diffusion we 'rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.'

REPORT OF THE FOREIGN DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION,

MAY 29, 1832.

As respects the condition and prospects of Unitarian Christianity beyond the borders of our own country, there are a few statements to be made, which although of no unusual interest, are yet of a character to gratify those who are waiting for the improvement of the world and the triumph of truth.

In Great Britain we have the gratification of perceiving that our friends pursue their good work with unabated zeal and a still improving spirit. We have been especially made to rejoice in the success which has attended their efforts to establish a ministry in London on the model of that of Dr Tuckerman in this city. The project has been warmly and eloquently advocated, — the necessary subscription liberally made — and the Rev. Mr Philp, recently of Lincoln, has actually received the appointment, and perhaps has already entered on his important and charitable labors.*

We heartily congratulate our English friends on this event, and devoutly bid them God's speed; and add to it the wish and prayer, that this coöperation in similar plans

* While this Report is going through the press, we have the high satisfaction of learning not only that Mr Philp has actually entered on his duties in London, but that a similar mission is about being commenced in Manchester; to support which one individual of the Unitarian Society in Mosely Street, has offered between two and three hundred pounds a year.

of benevolence may tend to draw more closely the bonds of brotherhood between us, and to warm the hearts of all with a yet more active spirit of benevolence.

In Scotland many circumstances have occurred to excite an increased interest in Unitarian views — several new societies have been gathered, and the Scottish Unitarian Association has been organized. In Ireland, also, our brethren who passed so nobly through their trial, continue to 'stand fast in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and in nothing terrified by their adversaries.' What may be the effect of the present important political movements on the prospects of religion in the British Empire, it is difficult to foresee. We cannot persuade ourselves however that it can be other than good. For a season it may perhaps distract men's attention from religious discussion; but the tendency is unquestionably toward freedom of mind; — this must result favorably to the truth; — and it is impossible not to think, that when the embarrassments thrown in the way of free inquiry and free profession by the operation of the Establishment shall have been removed, the truth will run with new speed, and be glorified by an extension that it never yet has enjoyed. We have confidence that this anticipation cannot be disappointed. Meantime it becomes us to reciprocate every expression of cordial good-will which our brethren extend toward us — and to wish for them the enjoyment and the blessings of that liberty of conscience which has so long been partially denied them.

In passing to France, we have to regret the interruption of a correspondence from which we had expected to derive much minute information. We are in consequence only able to state in general terms, that, although the unsettled political condition of the country has to a

certain extent interrupted the attention which was beginning to be earnestly given to Religion, yet the times are there still characterised by a spirit of religious inquiry, awakening with fresh zeal after its long suspension, and turning with favorable eyes toward the Protestant faith. Of the inquirers thus engaged, we are assured that no small proportion are desirous to find a more liberal and rational faith than that presented by Orthodox Protestantism, and have turned their attention to Unitarian representations of the gospel. Some of the distinguished Protestant ministers are of anti-calvinistic sentiments, and are engaged in enlightening the public through the press as well as from the pulpit. The design has been agitated of creating a society expressly for Unitarian worship in Paris, which is probably only suspended until more quiet times shall arrive. And, meantime, the English and American residents have formed such a Society — have provided a preacher — are engaged in the regular support of christian institutions — and have formed the Unitarian Association of France. From this body a long and interesting communication has been received, which has been extensively circulated, and to which your Secretary has replied in a letter of sympathy and encouragement.

Concerning Geneva nothing has transpired of any moment, beyond what is already familiarly known through the public journals. The Company of the Pastors, with its accustomed and well-known liberality, has installed amongst its members a new preacher of Orthodox sentiments, notwithstanding the unworthy measures which that party have pursued toward the Company. We cannot say, however, that we see reason to hope any conciliating result from this christian measure of moderation.

Everything shows that the Evangelical party are resolved at any rate, and by any means, to pursue their own ends, and destroy if possible the ancient establishments of the country. A new theological school has been erected by them in the city, and a new set of professors introduced for the purpose of opposing the present order of things, and bringing back the dominion of Calvin in the church. That they will find pupils, and be able to a certain extent to distract the public mind, we do not doubt. But we trust that through the fidelity of the watchmen in that venerable citadel, and the blessing of God on his church, they will be unable to arrest the actual progress of truth, or turn back for three hundred years the march of christian improvement.

We are happy in being able to announce the opening of a correspondence with the Unitarians of Transylvania during the past year. A Transylvanian nobleman, accompanied by a professor of the university, being on a visit to the United States, brought letters to your Secretary,— expressed great interest in the religious institutions of the country — gave and received much information — and promised to maintain a regular interchange of letters after returning to their home. It is particularly gratifying to have thus favorably opened to us a channel of communication with that ancient fraternity, which still flourishes in wealth, learning, distinction and numbers, and constitutes one of the most interesting divisions of the church.

From this oldest member of our brotherhood, we pass, in the last place, to the most recent — that little, humble, but devout and zealous handful of the faithful, collected in the extreme East by the ministry of that lowly apostle, William Roberts. We should do wrong to name him

without an expression of veneration for his patience of faith and labors of love. He still lives and toils for the progress of the gospel and the salvation of the heathen. Besides his own little body of converts at Madras, he has the pleasure of seeing another collected in another place through the instrumentality of a native teacher, whom he himself converted and instructed; and of seeing two of his sons preparing themselves to prosecute the same work. One of them still pursues his studies under the superintendence of the Rev. J. R. Beard, in Manchester, and is spoken of as a youth of promise. His brother is in a course of preparation elsewhere, aided by funds from America. May they and their excellent parent live to labor long, and to see the fruit of their labors—not only honored as instruments in the hand of God to plant a branch of the christian church in that heathen land,—but also to stir up in the hearts of their christian brethren in Europe and America, a deeper interest and a warmer sympathy in that great cause of the extension of the gospel.

It would be easy to add to the pages of this Report by enlarging on the various topics of remark which crowd on the mind, as it reflects on the survey which we have now rapidly taken. But it cannot be necessary. It is sufficient to remind the brethren of the American Unitarian Association that they are not — as they must perceive — a solitary, insulated body. They are a portion of the company of believers scattered abroad in every region of the globe — they are members of a community which has numerous adherents and important interests all over the world — and it is their duty to extend their sympathy and fellowship, and their charity and prayers, to all these their wide spread brethren of a

common faith. It should be the result of the survey we have taken, and of the meeting we are holding, to enlarge our hearts and excite our zeal — till we shall learn to know and bless all who bear the name of brethren wherever they may be, and to extend the blessings of that name to all who are so unhappy as not yet to enjoy them.

After the reading of the Reports, the Rev. Dr BANCROFT, of Worcester, the President of the Association, briefly addressed the meeting. He expressed the regret he felt, that the circumstances in which Unitarians had involuntarily been placed, laid them under a necessity of meeting and acting separately from other Christians. But thus it was. And in the course they had adopted, they have every encouragement to persevere, and to expect a favorable result as to the influence of their measures on the happiness and improvement of the religious community. He invited the remarks of any gentlemen present who felt an interest in the operations and success of the Association.

Judge ROGERS, of Boston, then moved the acceptance of the Reports, and accompanied his motion with the following remarks :

Mr President—The Reports which have just been read furnish abundant evidence, that the objects of this meeting have exerted a wide and increasing influence throughout our country ; and this crowded assembly is a pledge, that they have lost none of their interest in this city, since the last Anniversary.

It is well remarked in one of these Reports, that

Unitarian Christianity did not originate as a sect or party. Those among us, who first embraced its truths, entered into no agreements, and adopted no articles of faith; they signed no creeds among themselves, and united to propagate none among others. Their faith was the separate conclusion and result of the action of independent minds, each thinking, inquiring, and deciding for itself, and adopting that belief, for which it was willing to be responsible by itself. The camp of opposing sects was all around them, fortified and defended on several points with much zeal, and some intolerance. As each revolted at some error or superstition, discovered that some doctrine was unsupported by reason or scripture, or became alarmed at its consequences, they were driven in upon each other, as upon a centre, from the several points of opposition, by which they were on all sides met. But they were made to approximate by a force from without, and not by a combination within. As they approached certain conclusions and found others moving in the same direction, and began to consult and compare, union of sentiment produced union of action; but they differed from other sects in this, that their union was the effect, and not the cause of these circumstances. If we are a sect, it is involuntary; it is because others have compelled us to become such; and it will continue no longer, than the force which compels us continues to operate. We ought always to remember this, and this Anniversary ought never to pass away, without a testimony of our gratitude to those, who from higher motives than those of a sect or a party, proclaimed all the truth, which they had discovered. Truth whispers itself at first to a few minds, perhaps to but one;

but wo be to those, who are in advance of their age, and refuse to lock up their newly discovered treasure in the privacy of their own breast. Persecution has but taken a new and perhaps a worse form; it wars against the mind, instead of the body, and wounds and lacerates the feelings and affections instead of the flesh. The axe, the stake and the dungeon, are no longer the fashionable instruments to bring back wanderers from the popular faith; but the edge of slander is as sharp as ever, and can make that life miserable, which it cannot destroy; the fires of intellectual persecution sear and burn into the very soul, and prejudice and intolerance separate men as effectually from many whom they love and respect, as the walls of a prison.

The Report observes, that we do not love controversy for itself, and we might say perhaps, that, as it is often conducted, we do not love it at all. But the evil, great as it is, is not in controversy, but in the manner of conducting it. Few truths, if any, even among those now universally received, have ever been established without it. If there were any subject, about which all men thought rightly and alike, without debate and discussion, it would soon be treated with carelessness and indifference. Truth would insensibly slide into error, or difference of opinion would arise, and controversy would then step in to vindicate the claims of truth. Truth is stricken out by the collision of mind with mind, as fire is stricken out between the flint and the steel. And while one truth is doubtful, or one error remains to be exploded, controversy must continue until the truth be established, or the error detected and exposed. We are told that ours is the religion of the reason and affections;

and so it is ; and the affections are the children of gentle influences, which are disturbed by the din of controversy. But Reason must first put on her armor, and go out to the moral and intellectual combat ; she must deliver us from the control of the religion of the senses, and that of the imagination and passions ; she must conquer the restless and vindictive spirit of error in its thousand and gigantic forms ; must tie the tongue of slander, and set free the prisoners of bigotry and superstition ; and then will come the gentle and quiet reign of the affections ; and not till then. We must learn to distinguish between the use and abuse of controversy ; and to frown upon that spirit of injustice, intolerance, and violence, which makes controversy so great an evil, when it is capable of so much good.

We are told in the Report that our religion is said to be a mere negation. This complaint, in its popular form, is generally an accusation of coldness and want of feeling, of pulling down everything and building up nothing. If we have been too cold, there is no sincere Christian who will not confess, that he has been often guilty of the same fault ; but he may allege in extenuation, that he has also sometimes been too warm. Surely we are no worse, because we cannot admit one fault as a defence of another. But there is more than one kind of warmth, and the heat of passion is full as common among men, I fear that I must say, among Christians, as warmth of affection. But if we have been too cold, the circumstances of the time, and not the articles of our faith have been the causes ; and where this has not been the case, it has been the fault of the believer, and not of the belief. Extremes lead to opposite extremes. In

avoiding a fault, which we have seen all around us, it would have been no more than the common weakness of humanity, to fall into the opposite error. But we have yet to learn, that extraordinary warmth is the sign of a good cause. He who has to maintain the worst side of a question, commonly exhibits the greatest heat. History does not inform us, that greater zeal has been exhibited in defence of truth, than of error, or that error has been more frequently the object of persecution than truth; but it does prove, what our own experience confirms, that a bad cause is generally defended with the greatest warmth, while moderation and candor have generally accompanied the best.

But this charge can no longer be made with any great show of plausibility. The occasion which has brought us together, and the place where we are, suggest a conclusive answer; and we need to send our thoughts no farther to find facts which will contradict it. Under the patronage of the Association, whose anniversary is the occasion of our meeting, the Mission to the Poor of this city has carried assistance and consolation into the abodes of poverty and distress, has given comfort to the mourning, relief to the suffering, food to the hungry, clothes to the naked, knowledge to the ignorant and hope to the dying. The benefits which this offspring of Unitarianism has bestowed upon society, have attracted the notice of cities of a distant continent, and by producing similar institutions, have been a blessing not merely to ourselves, but to the world. If we were present at a meeting of such an institution in England, and heard its benefits enumerated, in the presence of those who had received them; if we there beheld the gratitude of

those, whose wants it had relieved, whose ignorance it had enlightened, whose griefs it had consoled, whose consciences it had awakened, whose lives it had reformed and rescued from the miseries of this world and the next; and any one should rise and assert, that all this was part of the chilling influence of Unitarianism, that these warm streams of benevolence had issued from an icy fountain, who would not hear it with incredulity and astonishment?

The recollections of this place also suggest to me, that the last time that I was within its walls, was at a meeting of a society for the religious and moral instruction of Seamen, begun by our Methodist brethren, but which they had not the means to support and extend. They called upon Christians of all denominations, and received in a very short time, donations to the amount of more than $12,000, and subscriptions exceeding $600 per annum. It was my duty then to solicit this aid, and I may therefore speak without embarrassment of the manner in which it was given. We were cheered with immediate encouragement and sympathy, with spontaneous bursts of feeling and good wishes, with the most prompt and willing pecuniary assistance. The heart as well as the purse was in the hand which was held out to us. We acknowledge with pleasure the assistance of other Christian denominations, who cöoperated with us; but we cannot suppress the fact, that seven eighths of the assistance received by that society was from our own denomination. Let that Society say, if they found that Unitarianism made men cold and indifferent, and we will abide by the result of their testimony. I will not go beyond what the place and occasion recall to my mind, or I might produce much more evidence; and

it is because we are compelled to do it, if we say so much in self-defence, which we would not say in self-commendation.

The second form of this complaint is a charge, that we pull down much, which has been already built upon the broad foundation of Christianity, and erect nothing in its place. We confess the charge. There is nothing for us to build. 'The author of our faith' is also declared to be its 'finisher,' and the temple of christian truth is not now to be built. Human hands have covered it with gaudy gilding and meretricious ornaments, and we must remove them. The tabernacles of many sects have been built against its walls; one tabernacle to Luther, and another to Calvin, and others to all their distinguished leaders. They encumber, and darken, and conceal the temple of Christ, and they must be pulled down. We must sweep away the dust, with which centuries have loaded its floors, and the rubbish which is heaped upon its altars and shrines; and then it will stand forth in all the brightness of its beauty and the perfection of its proportions. The feet of future and purer generations may penetrate farther into its recesses; they may approach altars, upon which the fire of devotion burns with a purer, holier and warmer flame; they may purge their eyes more completely from the films of mortality, and discover that its spires and pinnacles rise higher towards heaven, than our gaze can penetrate; but they will find nothing to build. Everything will show the original workmanship of its founder; man may destroy or deface it, but can add nothing, and improve nothing. These human institutions, so adverse to the simplicity of the gospel, are defended with

zeal, and no doubt with sincerity; and much property is pledged and held in trust to support them, to perpetuate the belief of ancient creeds, and rivet upon the human mind the fetters of a dark, discouraging and mystical theology. While all admit that religion and morals, as well as art and science, have made great progress within the last centuries, and that much more is still to be learned from the Bible, these trusts are held for the benefit of those, who will learn no more, and who refuse to know more than was known three hundred years ago. What should we think of a school or a college endowed for the very purpose of giving no more instruction than was then given; where the teachers had contracted to teach and the scholars to learn no more; where its premiums and beneficiary assistance were to be given to those, who knew the least and believed the least of all the discoveries and improvements in art and science which had been made since that time? Is not the principle equally injurious in religious as in secular education, and how do churches, held under such trusts, differ from schools so endowed? Such institutions are unfavorable to a state of progress, and the spirit of an age of improvement. Every generation will go farther from them, and some have been already abandoned.

The progress of religious opinions is like the march of an army; it has its leaders, its advance, its main body, and its rear. There are some original and grasping minds who are always in advance of the age; who seize and compel truth to disclose itself long before it reaches others; and these are the leaders. Others, without the same power to detect and unveil its concealed form, have the will to receive, the ability quickly and

fully to comprehend, and the independence to adopt it; and these are the advance of this army. Then comes the main body, composed of many sects, going forward rank behind rank, as each has docility and intelligence to learn, and sincerity and firmness to avow their opinions. And last comes the rear, comprising the simple and ignorant, the timid and feeble, the prejudiced, the bigoted, and the superstitious, those who cannot and who will not improve, those who believe everything and those who believe nothing, and all who would not advance, if they could help it. But they cannot help it. As surely as the leaders move, the advance will follow and the main body will soon occupy the ground which the advance has just left. The ranks of the rear then begin to waver; they will explain an opinion, and qualify or conceal a dogma, give a new coloring to one view and keep out of sight some revolting feature in another; deny that they now believe this, and that they ever did believe that; thus proving that they begin to feel the effect of the movement, and that progress, the great law of the human mind, which has carried forward all who were before them, is now beginning to compel them to move. It is nothing to the argument that the explanation may be unsatisfactory; the mystery may conceal nothing, the change be no improvement, and the new position be as untenable as the former. Whether it be so or not, it proves with equal certainty, that they must move forward and cannot by any effort resist and remain at rest; and thus the whole body, from the first to the last of its ranks, obeys the great law of progress, that law of time and eternity.

If Unitarian Christians compose the advance of this

army, we must feel that we have a high and honorable post; more high and honorable than any other which this world can give. But we can scarcely indulge our satisfaction at this, before we are oppressed with the greatness of its responsibility and the consequences which may depend upon the prudence of our counsels and the vigor of our exertions. But if great trusts require great exertions, they also promise great rewards; and what greater reward can we desire, than the conscious feeling, that we have sent the truth to thousands of minds, who but for us would never have known it? The Reports tell us that this reward has already commenced, and has crowned the exertions of the past year with more than its usual fruits. This success is given to excite to greater, much greater exertion, and to inspire greater confidence, that if we faint not we shall reap a harvest, wherever there is a mind to understand, and a heart to feel the blessings of Unitarian Christianity.

Rev. Andrew Bigelow, of Medford, seconded the motion for the acceptance of the Reports; and commenced his remarks by an allusion to the reference made in the Domestic Secretary's Report to himself, in his capacity as Agent of the Association. He stood there, he said, to bear his testimony to the enlightened zeal of the people, throughout the numerous towns he had visited, and their coöperation in the measures that had been commenced for enlarging the influence and usefulness of the Association.

Sir, said Mr B., I was gratified beyond measure with the evidences of awakened interest and engagedness in the great and good work witnessed in my several jour-

neys. Of the parishes generally which were visited, and emphatically of those in Middlesex South, and the counties of Worcester and Plymouth, I bear record, — as did the Apostle of the churches of Achaia, — that in relation to our appeal they were ready a year, ay, and more than a year ago. The forwardness of their minds and their zeal have already provoked others, and, I trust, will provoke very many more. Sir, the sentiment was universal among our Unitarian friends, that the time was come when something more effectual should be done to maintain our cause, — that measures more vigorous, more determined, more consentaneous should be adopted the better to protect our rights, to cover our positions, to disseminate our principles — especially to withstand that active, well organized opposition from without, always lowering upon our path, which watches our every movement and stands ready to dispute inch by inch each step of our progress. Yes, sir, I do but repeat the sentiment of our brethren wherever I met with them, that the period has arrived when the friends of Liberal Christianity must, one and all, bestir themselves, — must take the field as a body militant, — and with weapons, not carnal but spiritual, — wielding above all the sword of the spirit, even the word of God, be prepared, shoulder to shoulder and at all points, to wage a holy warfare with error and prejudice and superstition and intolerance, till truth shall conquer and reason prevail, and our religious liberties be impregnably secured and established.

Ours, Mr President, is no aggressive contest. The alternative is no longer left to our option, nor is the position we occupy one of our choosing. The combat is forced upon us. We war not in the spirit called a lust

for victory, but from the instinct of self-preservation. If soldiers, we are soldiers of the Lamb: — if warriors, we fight under the banners of the Prince of Peace. You, Mr President, need not be reminded that the dawn of our struggle dates back to 1815, — a memorable year in the annals of our churches. In the pages of a well-known periodical, a grossly vituperative assault was made upon American Unitarianism, not sparing either the characters or the principles of its more prominent advocates. That, sir, was the signal of onset; when our churches were all at peace, when they had rest within, when they were walking in their ancient order and fellowship, and were mutually nourished and edified. The chiefs of that class of Christians called Orthodox, — men, who if they held to the form of speculative doctrine, had yet renounced or forgotten the true spirit, of the Pilgrims — sounded the cry of heresy against us. And why? Because as sons of Protestant sires, Hebrews of the Hebrews, mindful of our religious liberty, and in the exercise of the rights of private judgment handed down to us from our Puritan forefathers, we had conscientiously arrived at different interpretations of Holy Scripture from their own. The cry of heresy, I have said, was sounded; and our adversaries mustered their legions to the field. But God was with us; and men there were with us endued with His spirit, and who, strong in the Lord, came up to the help of His cause against the mighty. And thus a little one became a thousand, and a small one was magnified to an invincible host.

The majority of our brethren, especially beyond this neighborhood, could not for a while believe that a regular, a systematized, an implacable warfare against our rights,

our liberties and our faith, — pointing to no less than the overthrow of them all, — was seriously waged by our opponents. Or, they thought perchance that the very violence of the storm presaged its near and speedy termination. They were disposed therefore to bear and to forbear, and to await quietly the issue. It was not till ten years after the period to which I have referred, — not till 1825, — that this institution, the American Unitarian Association, was formed and embodied. It rose up and grew out of the pressure of inevitable circumstances. And a firm rallying point to our ranks, a strong bulwark of our principles, a high tower of defence, thank God, it has continued to prove. The stone by other builders refused, — the stone inscribed in living characters with the glorious truth, that GOD IS ONE, — that stone was set up as the headstone of the corner. Hitherward, the eyes of our brethren in all quarters of their dispersion, are turned in hope and joy and pious confidence; and the aspirations of ten thousand hearts are daily lifted to the God of Truth, that this structure may stand, and stand unmoved, having for its munition the Rock of Ages.

Mr President, reflecting minds, (and they are confined to no one class or walk or profession in life,) — minds that heretofore have paid little attention to speculative diversities of faith, and the discriminating features of religious parties — are now fast opening to a just perception of the deformity of the dogmas of the Genevan school. They are opening to a discernment of the sinister tendencies of the doctrinal system we oppose, which seeks to rivet, along with the trammels of a dark and scholastic theology, the shackles of a spiritual domination over the minds, the consciences and the souls of men. They are

opening to a sense of the moral needs of the community at large, perceiving the want of an intellectual and benignly operative form of Christianity in wider ascendency, — such an interpretation of divine truth as shall satisfy equally the heart and the understanding. They are opening to a conviction of the evils of that spirit of fanaticism now abroad in our land, which dethrones reason to exalt faith, which invades the peace of homes and of neighborhoods, which makes foes those of one's household, separating kindred from kindred and man from his fellow. I have gathered enough during my recent journeys on the business of the Agency, to satisfy my mind abundantly, were further confirmation of the fact wanting, that the 'Four days' Meetings,' and the 'Revivals,' so called, consequent upon them, have produced, or are producing, a re-action far different in its results from what those who projected the plan of operations could have foreseen or desired. The primary effect of them undoubtedly has been to augment the number of religious professors of a certain stamp, and thus to swell the muster-roll of their church members; but a secondary effect as unquestionably is to disaffect the sober-minded in the community, and to detach their affections, certainly their respect, from the cause which before they were willing to support. Even in parishes where the machinery of which I speak has seemingly wrought most prosperously, where looking to the surface, the general tide of feeling and of sympathy has apparently set altogether in one and the prescribed course, a more careful examination has detected a counter current, — a strong *undertow* of sentiment, running in quite the opposite direction. It is a stream which heaves and works and saps unseen

and unheard, and therefore menaces surer downfal of those churches and pastors who have encouraged or who have tolerated such measures.

If, sir, these facts be thought to furnish auspicious omens of the march of liberal opinions, and the development of sounder views in respect to the true genius of Christianity, let it not be forgotten that the tendency of the human mind is often to extremes. When once it has been roused to an insurrectionary movement against a creed and theology before unsuspectingly embraced, and it finds them to be but impositions on its good sense and credulity, it is apt to renounce all reverence for religion. We have therefore to withstand fanaticism on the one hand, and something more than latitudinarianism, — a cold skepticism or still colder unbelief, on the other. We have to furnish antidotes to the former, and to rear up effectual barriers against the latter. The operations of the American Unitarian Association are conducted with a reference to this double claim on its solicitudes. Its publications are specially framed to meet the distinguishing wants of the times. In many places no living voice, the testimony at least of no regularly authorized teacher, is heard in vindication of our views and our tenets. But wherever our publications spread, there is a silent witness, and there an eloquent and an impressive monitor of the simplicity and power of the truth in Jesus. In divers quarters these publications must be gratuitously distributed. Minds disgusted with tracts of an opposite character, which have been scattered with prodigal liberality and sown broadcast over the country, hail as precious seed — as the good seed of the Word, — the simple, vital, practical truths set forth in our monthly publications. The

demands on the Association, to meet these and other requisitions, all involving pecuniary disbursements to a greater or less extent, are far beyond its present resources. Much as has been done or is doing by our country brethren to increase the means, more and much more is absolutely needful, and it is confidently looked for from other and nearer quarters.

Mr Bigelow concluded his remarks with an earnest appeal to the liberality of Bostonians, — whose praise it proverbially is, not to follow, but to take the lead in judicious schemes of benevolence, — to set an example to the friends of the cause at a distance, by early and generous contributions to the funds of the Association.

George B. Emerson, Esq. of Boston, then addressed the meeting, as follows:

Mr President — I rise, to respond to the expression of catholic feeling which pervades the Report. I regret and have always regretted that we could not continue to act with Christians of other denominations in the great works which are now occupying the christian world. I rejoice in these works, wherever and by whomsoever wrought. When I see the blessings of Christianity, and with it the blessings of civilization, flowing back after the lapse of thousands of years into Africa, I cannot but rejoice at it. When I witness the triumphs of the gospel among the islands of the Great Ocean, I ask not in whose name they are gained, but I heartily rejoice in them. There is not time, Mr President, even to glance at the more prominent of these glorious works, carried on, as they now are, in almost every part of the globe.

To turn our attention then to our own country and to

notice a few of those that meet our eyes in our own neighborhood and among ourselves: — When I see a man giving all his energies to the work of improving the condition of those who are in prison, and sending the gospel among them; or devoting his life and strength to the service of the deserted and hitherto despised sailors; or to rescuing from wretchedness and sin, and training up to the service of God, children that have none to care for them, I involuntarily hail that man as my brother. I ask not, I have no inclination or right to ask, in whose name he is acting. The question has already been answered by one from whose authority I know no appeal. When he was asked whether he were 'he that was to come,' he answered, 'to the poor the gospel is preached.'

Why, then, I may be asked, if you feel thus cordially towards all other Christians, do you stand here to defend Unitarianism? Not, sir, because it is Unitarianism, but because it is Christianity. I value Christianity, and I am willing anywhere and everywhere to declare, that I value Christianity above everything else under heaven. And to me, after the faithful examination I have been able to give it, Unitarianism seems the simple truth of God, the simple truth of the gospel given by him, whose name I believe to be the only name given among men by which they may be saved. Believing this, I should be false to my brethren in the same persuasion, false to myself, to Christ and to God, if I hesitated to avow it. I believe Christianity to be the only way provided for the eternal salvation of men. I believe it to be something more than this. In the present condition of the world and of our own country, I believe Christianity furnishes the only firm and solid basis upon which the civil institu-

tions of our country may securely rest. We have been told that the last year has been a year of peculiar excitement. It has indeed, sir, in many respects ; and I believe there are few who hear me, whose hearts have not sometimes sunk, when they beheld the pillars of supreme justice shaken, and brute force threatening to prevail in the highest halls of legislation. I believe, sir, that the truths of Christianity furnish the only effectual remedy for the evils which these ominous appearances indicate; and therefore, if for no other reason, do I wish to see it prevail universally in our land, till the gospel shall be preached to every creature. I wish to see it prevail in any form in which it is preached ; and I would offer nothing but encouragement to every one, of whatever name, whom I see engaged in preaching it. But if I contribute anything to its advancement myself, it must be in that form in which it commends itself to my reason and conscience — the form of Unitarian Christianity.

But, notwithstanding the strong conviction of the understanding with which I embrace this simple form of Christianity, I know not that I should not have some hesitation in receiving it as the infinite truth, as I now regard it, if I did not see it producing the fruits, which our Master, its divine author, has declared to be the evidence of its truth. But these fruits, I thank God, it does abundantly produce, in all the forms of peace on earth and good will to man, which christian benevolence can dictate.

Is there any one that hears me, who doubts who is meant by 'the friend of peace?' Is it necessary for me to name that venerable man, who has so long defended with his able pen, as he beautifully illustrates in his pure and exemplary life, the principles of the peace of the gospel? Is not he a Unitarian?

And who, sir, is 'the friend of the poor?' Who is he who first among us set himself apart, and devoted his whole heart and strength to the cause of the friendless and abandoned poor in our city? Is not he also one of us? Is not he a Unitarian?

We all now rejoice in the great progress which the principles of Temperance are making. I believe all Christians are now equally alive to their great importance. But many years before this earnestness became general, a few Christians in this vicinity, principally, but not exclusively, those who are now called Unitarians, were silently but untiringly advocating this cause; sowing the seeds which have at last sprung up, and promise to produce an abundant harvest.

So, sir, has it been with the cause of the seamen. All look upon the institutions which here and elsewhere are provided for their instruction in the truths of the gospel, as charities of the most noble and unexceptionable character. Who first conceived the plan of this excellent charity I know not; but the first meeting I ever heard of, in this country, for the express purpose of providing religious instruction for seamen, was held in the study of an eminent Unitarian minister of this city, now long passed to his reward, whom I need not name, and whom few that ever knew him can name without emotion.

I make not these statements boastingly, Mr President, but merely to show that the form in which we hold Christianity, not only satisfies our reason, but bears the fruits, by which alone our Master has authorized us to judge.

But Unitarians are charged with undervaluing the Bible. So far is this from being true, that we value it above

every other volume; we value it as the perfect and only standard of religious truth. What is the language in which a young man, who was about to devote himself to the study of this volume, in preparation for the ministry of the gospel, would be addressed by his religious teachers? Those who hold the obligation of creeds of human formation, would virtually address him thus. 'Young man, take this book; it is the word of God; study it diligently and faithfully, and abide by the truths which you find in it; but remember, that there are truths which we find in it, which if you fail to find, we cannot acknowledge you as a brother, or hold fellowship with you as a Christian.' On the other hand, the Unitarian teacher would say to him, 'Young man, take this book; it is the word of God; study it faithfully and diligently, examine it prayerfully and fearlessly, and whatever truths you find in it, those abide by, and teach, remembering that you are accountable to no one under heaven, but only to your own conscience, to Christ, and to God.' Which of these teachers shows the highest respect for the Bible?

There are some doubtless who hold these truths with unwavering confidence, who yet consider themselves as not called upon to make any exertions for their propagation. 'The truth is mighty,' they say, 'and will prevail,' and they seem to imagine that the truth will prevail by some mysterious energy of its own; while they, who flatter themselves that they possess it, may fold their arms and give themselves up to a supine indifference. The truth is indeed mighty, sir, and will prevail; but over what, and where, and how, will it prevail? The truth, I conceive, can prevail only over ignorance or error, or falsehood, in my own mind, or in the mind of

some other person. It can prevail in my own mind, only by means of patient and diligent examination and inquiry. I must examine the grounds of the truth, and sift it, till I have separated it from falsehood. And when I have attained to what I believe to be truth, how can I show that it prevails with me, and is mighty? Surely, sir, I deceive myself in supposing it to prevail with me, if it do not rouse me to exertion. If it do indeed prevail with me, it will move me, mightily, to communicate this precious good to others who have it not. And how shall it prevail in other minds? The only way that I can conceive of, sir, (not that I doubt that the truth may and does sometimes come immediately into the mind from the Father of all truth, but I believe this is not the common course of God's providence,) the only way I can conceive is by the truth being presented to the minds of others and urged upon them.

And what shall I do to make it prevail with others? If I were a preacher, I could go to them and proclaim what I believe to be the truth. But I am not a preacher, and cannot go myself. I must therefore do what I can to send preachers to others, or if I cannot send the living voice, to send the written, living letter, to carry the truth to others. Instead then of saying, 'The truth is mighty and will prevail,' let us say, '*The truth is mighty, and by God's blessing on our exertions, it shall prevail.*'

Rev. Samuel K. Lothrop, of Dover, N. H. expressed the great satisfaction he had felt in the statements of the Report and in listening to the remarks of his brethren. They were refreshing to his spirit. Those only, who had been placed where Unitarian societies were few and

scattered, could truly estimate the value of frequent intercourse, and interchange of sympathies with those of a similar faith. Stationed as I am upon one of the outposts of our Zion, there have been times, said he, — and for the truth of my remark I appeal to the experience of any man, particularly every young man similarly situated, — when I have been almost ready to sink under the depressing influences of my solitary and insulated situation, notwithstanding my sincere conviction that God and truth were on my side. But to come up here and behold this array of numbers and of talent, to learn how much has been done and how much there is doing in the dissemination of our views, and see how many there are interested and engaged with me in the same great work, inspires me with new life and will send me home, as I am sure it will every individual here, to labor on in his particular charge with a holier, a more earnest and devoted zeal.

With regard to that portion of country, sir, in which I reside, and the whole State of New Hampshire, there is little information in the Report of the Committee, because there is in fact little of a specific kind to communicate. I am happy, however, to be able to say that the progress and prospect of Unitarian principles in New Hampshire is highly encouraging. In Portsmouth, the cause has long had the advantage of the services of a man whose praise is in all the churches, and whose high example of christian excellence is doing much to break down existing prejudices against our faith and to gain for it the respect and affection of the community. A spirit of religious inquiry and an actual zeal for the promotion of pure christian truth has been awakened in other places.

In the county in which I reside, one or two Unitarian Associations have been recently formed, the germs I trust of future flourishing societies. These Associations intend to have preaching a part if not all the year. As there are gentlemen present from other sections of the State, it does not become me to speak particularly of those sections; but I may observe generally that nothing more seems to be necessary for the wide dissemination of our principles than a perseverance in our efforts to make those principles truly known, and especially to give practical evidence of their happy moral tendency.

But notwithstanding all the favorable accounts contained in the Reports, it may yet be doubted, I think, whether the great body of Unitarian Christians feel the responsibility they are under, or understand the strong ground of the obligation that is upon them to 'be up and doing,' earnestly and zealously, in the diffusion of their sentiments. It needs but a cursory glance at the records and subscription list of this Association, to perceive that it has never received what it ought to, and I trust will soon have, the entire encouragement and support of the whole body of Liberal Christians. There are still vast numbers who withhold from it their support, on the idea that it is a sectarian institution, that its object is to build up a party, and that its tendency is to increase the violence of the theological warfare that is desolating the land. This sentiment was once strong in my own mind, and for a time checked the ardor of my own zeal. That there is something in the very nature of an association to awaken and encourage a sectarian spirit, must perhaps be admitted; but, sir, the very principles on which this Association is formed are anti-sectarian and anti-exclusive in their

tendency; the evil of a bad sectarian spirit is not a necessary result of this Association. It can be prevented; and whether it can be or not, I am satisfied now, that we ought to run the risk of the evil for the sake of the greater good that will result from our labors. The evil is uncertain, and by care may be prevented; the good is certain and incalculable; and unless united and powerful exertions be made to diffuse those simple and rational views of Christianity which Unitarians hold, the influence of the gospel upon our whole community will, in the course of the next generation, be most wofully diminished, and in some cases entirely destroyed; and a withering and wide spread infidelity prevail. This is the strong ground on which I regard it as every Liberal Christian's duty, whatever may have been his prejudices against associations, to come forward and aid this institution.

I will not take the time necessary to establish and enforce the remark I have just made, because I see many other gentlemen ready to speak, whom it would give the audience and myself much greater pleasure to hear. But I will simply remark, sir, that in my apprehension, we have mistaken, or in a great measure overlooked, the point of our greatest danger. Our great cry has been about religious liberty; and our great fear was that the community would become enslaved to the dogmas of a particular sect. But we have far more to fear from skepticism and irreligion, than from spiritual tyranny. There is far more danger that multitudes will be driven by the very measures of the advocates of the Exclusive system, to make shipwreck of all religious faith, than that the community will ever be brought into subjection to that system. I wish to say nothing uncharitable; I am

ready to admit the many characters of exalted goodness and piety, that Orthodoxy has produced; yet it must be evident to all reflecting minds that it is a 'creed outworn;' that it is not adapted to the state of thought and feeling among the young, and does not adapt itself to the advanced and ever advancing state of society. The extraordinary measures that have been put in action, show that it must be *forced* upon the young. What then would be the consequence, sir, if we relaxed our exertions? Suppose that this Association ceased from this moment its operations. Let it burn every tract it has ever published, and scatter to the winds every dollar in its treasury, what would be the consequence? Would Orthodoxy prevail, and the Exclusive system be universally established? No, sir; there are thousands who will not, who cannot, and who do not receive that; and if nothing be done to save them, if they can have no other religion, no other Christianity but that, they will have none. This Association provides a remedy to this great evil. It is the only means of diffusing that system of Christianity which will give faith and hope and moral strength to thousands who would otherwise not receive it. Though we may not as individuals therefore entirely approve of all the measures, of all the tracts, and of the whole plan of this Association, it is our duty I think, sir, it is every man's duty, to sacrifice to a certain extent his private opinion, and in the name of God and virtue and Christ and truth, come forward and aid in this great work.

Rev. Charles C. Sewall, of Danvers, remarked, that an allusion having been made in the Report just read by the Secretary, to the meeting lately held in his church,

and a hope expressed that similar meetings may be held by our friends generally throughout the country, he felt called on to explain more particularly the object and the character of that meeting.

Although a very short notice had been given of the meeting at Danvers, still it was attended by a large number of persons, and honored with the presence of many of the most distinguished citizens of the vicinity. It indicated a deep interest in the cause of Unitarian Christianity, and elicited much interesting information. I look back upon the occasion, said he, with unmingled satisfaction. I cannot but believe, that if similar meetings were frequently held by the Unitarians in this country, as they are held by our brethren in England, and conducted with a due regard to the paramount interests of christian piety and charity, much good might be effected. They might be made the means of exciting and enlarging a spirit of sympathy and coöperation among the advocates of a 'like precious faith;' of diffusing more widely a just knowledge of our sentiments; of increasing an attention to the public ordinances and private duties of Christianity; and of giving to our denomination such a character for deep, earnest and practical piety, as would effectually secure us against the charge, so often laid at our door, of believing and inculcating a system tending to promote licentiousness and infidelity. More than this, sir; they would not only enable us most effectually to counteract the assertions of our adversaries, but they would be one of the most efficient means of improving ourselves. I therefore repeat the hope expressed by your Secretary, that the experiment may be repeated in other places, and that such meetings will ere long be held in every part of our country.

Sir, the present is a period of deep interest to Unitarians. The religious state of the community is such that every true Christian, every true lover of his country, must feel alive to the necessity of more zealous and well directed efforts for the defence of our religious institutions, for the increase of pure morals, and for the diffusion of sound and rational views of truth and duty. We see, on the one hand, the miserable effects of a misguided zeal, spreading far and wide through our country; disorganizing our parishes; breaking in upon the order, harmony, and peace of families and neighborhoods, and scattering the seeds of jealousy, dissension and hatred, under the pretence of a pious regard for the welfare of souls, and for the interests of Christ's kingdom upon earth. On the other hand, we see, too plainly see, an increasing tendency to an entire disregard of all religious principle and duty — to infidelity and licentiousness; and this too, I regret to say it, even among some who declare themselves friends to Liberal Christianity; but who, under this cloak, may be aiming a more effectual blow at Christianity itself. Although this latter evil may, in a great measure, be the result of the former, and of the extraordinary means, which have been adopted to produce and keep alive in the public mind, a most unnatural excitement, still I trust there are none who hear me, who do not most heartily deprecate this evil; who are not most anxious to check it in its bud; and who will not exert themselves to the utmost to root out from among us, all who are seeking shelter under our name for such unholy purposes.

What! shall it be said, sir, that Unitarians are the most lukewarm and indifferent professors of Christianity; the

most negligent of christian duties; the smallest contributors to christian charities; and that we are voluntarily cherishing among us a band of unprincipled men, enemies to our own cause and the cause of Christianity? This is said, sir; it is repeated daily in places, where we can have no possible means of counteracting its influence, but by sending forth a brighter and purer light from our own citadel at home; a light which shall penetrate the dark places of slander, and reach the high places of bigotry, and expose to view the falsehood and corruption therein cherished. Yes, sir, such things are said of us, and such things are believed, too. Does it not then become us to take care, that they should be no longer said; or if said, that they should be no longer believed?

If there be any love for the faith we have embraced, and which we regard as the pure knowledge of Christ; if there be any desire to perpetuate and extend that faith; any desire to promote purity of public morals, and to preserve the peace and comfort of private and domestic life; any desire to rescue our own and our children's souls from the danger of religious thraldom, and the more appalling miseries of reckless infidelity, then let us do our part to prevent the repetition of such vile and calumnious charges, by doing what we may, to foster a spirit of religious sympathy and of pious zeal for the truths and duties of Christianity, among all the believers in a rational and scriptural faith. And thus, in the possible event of the final prevalence of those opinions and sentiments, whose authority we cannot acknowledge to be just, and whose tendencies we are persuaded must be prejudicial to truth and virtue, or of the spread of infidelity and corruption, disorder and misery in the land; we

shall at least have the satisfaction of reflecting that we have conscientiously endeavored to do our part to avert these evils, and we may hope that the free-will offerings we have thus presented on the altar of truth and virtue will be accepted by God.

I believe, sir, that if there be one act of our lives, which will shed glory on the aged head, or form a beautiful memorial of departed youth, or support us in the trying hour of death; or be regarded by angels with joy, by God with approbation; it is that, in which we shall most entirely sacrifice our worldly ease, and worldly riches, and worldly pleasures, and worldly honors, to the great interests of truth and duty, of eternity and heaven. Let us make this sacrifice, and prefer to secure to ourselves the character of sincere, ardent, faithful Christians, before the most honorable distinctions of all earthly dominion.

Mr Justice STORY began by observing that he did not rise at so late an hour to make any formal address. If more time had been left he should have been glad to dwell a little upon some other topics not yet discussed. But it is useless to express regrets, or after such interesting discussions as those of this evening, to lament that more hours could not be devoted to such public duties. I rise, therefore, said he, merely to say a few words by way of apology for not making a speech. The topics, indeed, which rush upon the mind in considering the great objects of this Association are so various, that the difficulty lies rather in the selection and choice of them, than in illustrating or enforcing them. I may not even attempt to press a single one at present; but merely to suggest hints

to those about me,—hints, which in their fertile minds will germinate and ripen into mature reflection and solid good,—hints, which may at least awaken some of us to a more deliberate examination of our own duties, and admonish us of our own dangers.

Let us glance at our own peculiar situation at this very moment. It is now two hundred years since our ancestors came to this very spot to secure to themselves and their posterity the blessings of religious worship and liberty, that is, of what in the sincerity of their hearts they believed to be such. For this purpose they provided for the public worship of God and for the maintenance of parish ministers by a compulsive taxation. That system has, in substance, continued down to our day, subject to such alterations only, as, while the support of public worship, and of a pious and learned ministry should be effectually provided for, should leave at the same time a fair scope to the entire freedom of religious opinion. Under this system New-England has grown up and flourished; has acquired a solid moral and religious character; and has sustained institutions of a healthy, substantial structure, which we have proudly hoped might be perpetuated to our latest posterity. And yet we are now called upon by a Constitutional Amendment to uproot all this goodly system, and to introduce among ourselves the experiment, how far religion can be safely left to take care of itself. I do not say, that this step ought not to be taken; or that it cannot be safely taken. That would require a large survey of many important topics, which are incapable of being brought under examination at this late hour. But I do say, that the subject, momentous as it confessedly is, has not attracted, and does not attract, any attention pro-

portionate to its vast reach and consequences. We dream over it, as though it were an every day affair, to be taken up and dismissed at pleasure. Is not this very indifference a matter of just alarm?

I would upon this point suggest one other hint. It is, that no nation on earth has such strong reasons for fencing itself round on every side with the great principles of morals and religion, as America. I do not here speak of the future and immortal results, those which belong to all beings, and to our eternal welfare, which of themselves are sufficiently exciting to demand all our vigilance. But I speak of much more narrow results; those which belong to the little span of this life, to human liberty, to our political prosperity, to our grandeur and our perpetuity as a Republic. I have said, that no nation on earth has so great need of the deep-felt restraints and influences of religion, as America. And why? it may be asked. I answer, because we have thrown off all the guards which have been industriously planted in other countries to sustain and protect their institutions, good or evil. We have no hereditary peerage, no established church, no standing army, no royal prerogative, no influence of patronage, no fixed ranks and castes in society, which cannot be overleaped, and therefore protect what is weak in the system, and cover up what is imperfect. Our system of government is formed upon a perfect equality of rights and powers, upon a freedom to think and act, to elect and to be elected, running through every order of society. Everything here is subjected to public opinion. The will of the people makes and unmakes constitutions, and builds up or tears down whatever it decms fit, and appropriate for the common

good. And legislation is almost, in a practical sense, unlimited as to its power over our institutions, civil or religious, either to afford aid, or to withdraw aid; to modify, or change, or annihilate the existing system. What then can preserve us from mischievous innovations, from the restlessness of corrupt ambition, and the overthrow of our best institutions, but a sound, healthy, and enlightened state of moral and religious feeling, as well as opinion? To be safe, we must be sure that there lies at the bottom of our social organization a deep sense of religious obligation to God, as well as to man. It is our last, it is our only barrier against oppression on one side, and anarchy on the other. But I forbear. I may only touch this subject.

I would add, that the times, too, admonish us of peculiar dangers and startling difficulties. It has been said with great truth and force, so as already to have become a proverb, that 'the schoolmaster is abroad.' He is so. But there walks by his side, and accompanies every step, a giant of power of another sort, whose growth is cherished by the very nature of free inquiry. The skeptic also, is abroad, and he follows in a close and unrelenting vigilance upon the heels of the schoolmaster. Religion is now to be defended anew, and upon new as well as old grounds, to meet new objections, and to resist new theories. Let no man be deceived, or be lulled into security on such subjects. The press is, and may be resorted to, to perplex, and fill with doubts and anxieties, as well as to enlighten and cheer the minds of the young and the credulous.

This leads me to another remark, and that is, that it becomes a peculiar duty of Unitarians to interest them-

selves on subjects of this nature. It is from them, if from any class of religious persons, must come the efficient means of resisting infidelity. They are content to trust religion to the investigation and decision of human wisdom. They believe that Christianity can be sustained and vindicated by an appeal to the understanding as well as the heart of man. They do not resist the trial of it by human tests. They invite examination and inquiry; and they believe that they can triumphantly answer all objections. They do not feel at liberty to denounce and reproach; but they hope to convince. They, of all men, therefore, seem called upon in the spirit of candor to meet objections, and in the consciousness of truth to court investigation. If ever skepticism is to be silenced, it will be by Unitarians; because they are content to meet it upon the free and open ground of solid reasoning, and with a frankness that disdains concealment, and solicits questioning. It is the just boast of Unitarians, that they do not in form merely, but in fact, respect the right of private judgment. They follow out, or at least they endeavor to follow out, the true spirit (how little has it been followed out!) of Protestantism. It has been said with equal truth and spirit, that when Luther resisted the papal authority, he unconsciously aimed a fatal blow at all merely human authority, and led the way, without intending it, to the absolute right of free inquiry and the supremacy of individual judgment. Let it be the true honor of Unitarianism, that in this respect it becomes, what Protestantism seeks to be, but what it has never yet completely been, the guardian and protector of private judgment. Protestantism has hitherto done much for the church and the particular sect; but it has not

hitherto done much for the individual, as contra-distinguished from the church or the sect.

Another remark, which I would fain press upon my brethren of the laity, is, that the exigencies of the times call upon them in an especial manner to consider the claims of Religion, as the basis of our dearest rights and privileges. It is no peculiar trust or duty of the clergy. It belongs to the laity in common with them. Nay, so far as skepticism is concerned, the duty presses more strongly upon them; for they must daily be called to resist its attacks by all the reasoning which belongs to the common transactions of human life; and they cannot but meet at every turn with new proofs of a growing propensity to push forward ingenious doubts and plausible objections, which can be answered best by appeals to that common sense, which rules and directs the business of human life. Besides; who, more than themselves, have a deep stake in all the great interests of human society, and the institutions which adorn, and cherish, and sustain the moral foundations on which it rests? Let me tell them, that it will be in vain for them to bestow their wealth in splendid missions abroad, if they do not also give an equal impulse to missions at home; missions to renew the fainting hearts, and the bewildered understandings of men eager for truth, but withering under doubts that they cannot answer, or doctrines from which they cannot but revolt, or bigotry which they abhor, or fanaticism which at once alarms them, and deadens in their souls the genuine enthusiasm of virtue.

I appeal, then, to laymen, to Unitarian laymen, to aid in the spread of a wholesome spirit of inquiry, and of a solid, rational religion, which shall bring within the fold

of Christianity many an erring mind, that cannot sympathize with dogmas, which it cannot understand, and which is thus led to indifference, nay, to a fatal insensibility to the moral influences of society.

Judge Story proceeded to other remarks and hints of a similar nature, and concluded, by apologizing for the time he had occupied, and his consciousness, that what he had said was but an apology for a speech.

In consequence of the interest manifested by the audience in the exercises of the evening, and the impression that several other gentlemen were prepared to address the meeting, Rev. E. S. Gannett of Boston moved an adjournment to the same place, at seven o'clock on Thursday evening, and the meeting was accordingly adjourned.

At five o'clock on Thursday evening a meeting of the Association for business, was held in the Berry-street Vestry. After a full discussion of the expediency of adopting measures for the appointment of a General Agent, it was voted to proceed immediately to the choice, and on counting the votes, Rev. Ezra S. Gannett was found to be unanimously elected.

The meeting was opened in the church, at seven o'clock. Prayers were offered by Rev. Dr Kendall, of Plymouth.

After the reading of parts of the Domestic Secretary's Report offered on Tuesday evening, the meeting was addressed by Rev. E. S. GANNETT. He had received pleasure, he said, in hearing the parts of the Report, just read. He heartily concurred in the sentiments there expressed. The time had come, he believed, when Unitarian Christians should more distinctly show that

their doctrines are according to godliness, that they are founded on a rock, that they are from God, and lead to God by promoting purity of character, spirituality of mind, in a word, the life of God in our souls.

The Unitarian Association has been called sectarian; and in a certain sense it may be true; inasmuch as it supports some decided and definite principles. But in the bad sense of the word it is not true. It has never been exclusive or bigoted. In its principles of operation it is as broad as truth, and it hopes that its influence will be as deep and as high as truth. Its great purpose is to make men Christians, to make them holy men.

But the institution is said to have been sectarian in its measures. If this be true in any degree, it was owing to the necessity of its circumstances. The very name of Unitarianism, at the establishment of the institution, was a terror and a reproach. But circumstances have changed, and are changing. He trusted the time would come, and that it was not distant, when it would be a term of honor and glory.

The tracts of the Association were, at first, necessarily doctrinal; or, if you will so denominate them, they were sectarian; and to a certain extent they must, for a time, so continue. But may we not hope that they may presently become purely christian? It had been well said by one who preceded him that we seek to extend Unitarianism not as Unitarianism, but as Christianity. Yes, our grand object is to support the cause of christian love, truth and holiness.

Why did we unite in the formation of the Unitarian Association? We might have said, in reference to the call for benevolent efforts, — 'We cannot unite with

those who disseminate error. We know indeed that some of our brethren are suffering the unhappy consequences of erroneous religious teaching. We are sensible of their unpleasant condition. 'We sincerely pity them, but cannot help them.' Such is the inactivity in which we might have indulged, in regard to the moral condition and wants of our brethren. But no! we could not, as honest and good men, do thus. We were bound to unite in the formation of this Association; to unite for the defence and diffusion of what we deem the truth; the principles most promotive of practical Christianity. And we find in this great object a bond of duty. And what are these principles? What is Unitarian Christianity?

It is a religion of truth; a religion which teaches the existence of one Infinite Spirit, and the revelation of his will by Jesus Christ his Son, who has sealed the truth of his mission and teaching by his blood, and calls us to holiness and God by his pure and sublime precepts and doctrines and his perfect example. Does any one think that a man may be a Unitarian Christian, because he merely admits our doctrines, while, after the ordinary course of the world, he goes on through life neglecting the discipline of his character and affections, and indifferent to the moral condition and wants of his fellow-beings? No! I know no such Unitarian Christianity. It is the true and great purpose and tendency of our faith to fill us with love to God and man, and an active zeal for truth and duty. We are to feel, and to be continually influenced by the solemn and inspiring truth that we are the children of God, placed here for the discharge of important duties to God, to ourselves and mankind, in preparation for a future endless existence. This is Unitarian

Christianity. This is the state of mind and these are the feelings and purposes which will be cherished by the true Unitarian Christian. If we will but feel and manifest the full power of our principles, Unitarian Christianity may go on triumphing over all error, delusion and sin, till it reaches the utmost extremity of the country, and becomes the glory of our land.

Rev. George Ripley, of Boston, introduced his remarks by referring to the passages in the Report which were read at the opening of the meeting. It gave him pleasure to hear them again ; he should have been glad, had time permitted, to have heard the whole. Its important facts would have been listened to with interest. They would have encouraged and strengthened our hearts. They would have shown that the friends of Unitarian Christianity were alive to their highest interests and duties. And it is indeed so. They have given and are daily giving evidence that they are ready to go forth to the warfare in defence of truth; a christian warfare; a warfare in favor of practical Christianity, of piety and godliness. And this is the great purpose of the Association. He would not lift a finger in this cause, if he thought it a merely sectarian institution. It is not sectarian. It has indeed its doctrinal tracts; but it has also its practical tracts, and books, which have been extensively circulated and eagerly sought and read. He would refer particularly to one book, of which this was strikingly true — the recent work 'On the Formation of the Christian Character;'— a work which had been acknowledged even by those who differ from us in sentiment, to possess great merits, as holding a high rank among publications designed to promote practical Christianity.

Another evidence that we are not influenced by sectarian feelings is the late noble effort in favor of seamen, by Unitarian Christians. Ten thousand dollars were recently raised in a short time, to aid in the moral and religious improvement of seamen. And whom did they employ as their religious teacher? A man of another denomination; differing from them in many points of his faith.* He was not chosen for his singular gift of eloquence, but because he was a Christian, a man of a truly enlarged and generous christian spirit. And we rejoice in the fact, as it shows the real practical tendency of the views which we hold. It is not for the distinctions of party that we labor; it is the temper and character we chiefly desire to influence. Our great purpose is to lead men to the exercise of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. — It is not, then, for sectarian or party ends, but ultimately, for the promotion of the great practical truths and duties of the gospel, that we labor, in our endeavors to disseminate the plain and simple principles of Unitarian Christianity.

Mr R. concluded his remarks by referring to the great efficacy of these truths in the improvement of the heart and life, and to the power which, he had learned by experience, they possessed in the hour of sickness and death, among Christians of every variety of faith. It was the declaration of an eminent clergyman of the Church of England, of the Evangelical school, a short time before his death, that he was convinced that religion did not consist in the nice distinctions of different sects, but in repentance and faith; and, said Mr R. as far he had had

* Rev. E. T. Taylor, of the Methodist denomination.

an opportunity of observing, this sentiment was very general in seasons of great trial; he had visited many on such occasions, members of churches far removed in doctrinal opinions from his own, but had always found the undisputed truths of Christianity a sure support for the afflicted or the departing soul. For these reasons, among others, he felt an unshaken confidence that they were the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation, and as such, he hoped they might find admission to every heart.

Rev. F. A. Farley, of Providence, R. I. rejoiced most devoutly that the time had at last arrived, when Unitarians could appear thus publicly, thus unitedly, in behalf of pure, practical christian piety; when their voices were raised, not merely in defence of what they believed to be doctrinal truth, but to inculcate and enforce the necessity of admitting the strict and uncompromising morality of the gospel to operate universally and thoroughly upon the human soul, in all its energy and power. He therefore most gladly and heartily responded to the sentiments of his brethren who had preceded him. Still he believed that with all this, Unitarians must still appear, perhaps for a long time, distinctively as a sect. And he desired and hoped that they of this city and vicinity, would be ready to extend their sympathy to their brethren, who had still to encounter a virulence of prejudice and opposition, of which themselves might now in a great degree be rid. Away from this immediate neighborhood, at least, there was no scene or situation where such was not the case. It was not simply that we are abused, misrepresented, slandered in the pulpits and the public journals of those who differ from us,—those attacks might

be borne. But it was not in human nature not to feel, and feel deeply, when we found the unhallowed spirit of sectarianism entering into and disturbing the peace of home — alienating from one another the members of the same family — and even at the bedside of the sick and the dying, or in the midst of bereaved and mourning friends, watching every movement, and scrutinizing the prayers which were offered for the departing soul or afflicted survivors, to find the evidence of dangerous or ruinous heresy. God forbid, however, that we should meet this in a similar temper. It was not our indignation which was called for; but our pity. And it should be esteemed by all of us as our bounden duty to show in such scenes, yes, to show everywhere, by our conversation, by our lives, that our faith was not a thing of the lips but of the heart; that we valued it for its operation upon human character, its tendency to advance and secure human happiness, by placing it upon the only immoveable basis, a holy and christian life.

Mr F. proceeded to urge upon the audience, especially upon his brethren from abroad, the value and importance to the cause which we advocate, of public meetings at which might be discussed the great principles of our common faith. These awakened a spirit of inquiry, and what was a very great advantage, introduced laymen to a part of the direct labor of inculcating and enforcing the truth as it is in Jesus. This was a great gain. Men were too apt to take words from the mouths of clergymen, on these subjects, to be words of course. But when laymen were roused by a sense of duty to the work, their words told with tenfold power. Mr F. could bear witness of the good effects of such meetings, by his own observa-

tion and experience in the city where he resided; and he could not but hope that they would become more common in various parts of our country, with the design not simply of defending Unitarian views of Scripture doctrine, but of inspiring and enforcing a deeper sense of christian duty, and a more earnest and untiring devotedness to the grand, practical results of christian truth.

Rev. SAMUEL J. MAY, of Brooklyn, Conn. commenced with the remark that he had never felt more deeply impressed than now with the importance of our relation, as a body of Christians, to the community around us. He felt cheered and animated by what he had seen and heard.

In regard to the charge of our having taken the ground of a sect or party, if it is in any sense true, it is because we have been compelled to take this ground. We have united, not for the purpose of swelling the power and influence of a party, but for the defence and promotion of what we deem the principles of gospel truth, and pure Christianity. Let us give practical evidence that it is really so. There are some who think we cannot do too much against Orthodoxy. He had no sympathy with such a sentiment. He disliked it. There are many respects in which such opposition would abridge a good influence. He saw many things to approve in his Orthodox brethren and he rejoiced in them. It was his earnest desire that there should more and more prevail among Unitarian Christians a serious and deep sense of the responsibility of our condition, — of the obligations of personal holiness, as well as of activity in disseminating christian truth. He rejoiced in the daily evidence we

have of the increasing prevalence and practical operation of these views of duty. Let them prevail. They are the true fruits of the plain and simple principles of the gospel which we have embraced, and cannot fail in due time to conquer opposition to our views, and to compel assent to them as true Christianity.

Rev. T. R. SULLIVAN, of Keene, N. H. desired to call the attention of the meeting to the condition of those of our brethren at a distance, who though not *near* us are *of* us, and take a deep interest in our proceedings and earnestly look to us for encouragement and sympathy. Their wants are deeper than we can know or feel. They are in a condition of trial and temptation. Removed as many are from those with whom they can have religious sympathy, and surrounded perhaps by those who are opposed to Christianity and to all religion, from having mistaken its true character by knowing it only in its corrupt forms, — they have much to struggle with, and are in pressing need of our sympathy, encouragement and support.

The late religious excitements have been referred to, and their unhappy tendency lamented. Their undoubted influence had been, in many places, to drive off intelligent men from Christianity. Infidelity springs up boldly, and ensnares and deludes many, who under rational religious instruction would become ornaments and able defenders of the christian faith. These circumstances call loudly for our help, to redeem these who are thus tried and tempted from their perilous and evil condition. Mr S. desired to raise his voice and excite a proper sympathy in behalf of such, as well as of those of our distant brethren who are tried and pained not less by their privation of religious

privileges, than by the prevalence of religious indifference, and infidel principles around them. They want an outstretched hand of sympathy. They wait for it now. They walk but weakly and tremblingly. Let us strengthen their tottering steps.

Alden Bradford, Esq. of New Bedford, followed Mr Sullivan. Though he had not been hitherto actively engaged in promoting the interests of the Unitarian Association, he had not been indifferent to its objects. He had read its Annual Reports, and he approved its measures, and had sympathy with its friends. He was a Unitarian, in the simple and legitimate sense of the word. And he felt that it was an honorable and glorious company of believers, with whom he was associated. He could show from Ecclesiastical History, that Unitarianism is an ancient doctrine; that it is not, as has been said, a modern invention of the young men of the present day. He could testify, that when a student at Cambridge forty-five years ago, there was but one person among the officers and theological students, who was not a Unitarian; and among the believers of this doctrine at that time, he would name the venerable Professor Wigglesworth. Nor was their faith singular. Many clergymen in various parts of the commonwealth embraced it. Of fifteen clergymen in the Old Colony, ten were Unitarians. It was so also in other counties, to a considerable extent, particularly in Essex.

But Unitarians have been an abused sect. It is even pronounced *ex cathedrâ*, that we have discarded the Bible; 'that we build not on the Bible.' He would not call such a representation by the name to which it is justly

entitled. He would only say, it was a mistake. He could not view such misrepresentations in any other light, than as decidedly unchristian. He hoped that the young and active, who were engaged in promoting the important and benevolent purposes of this institution, would go on with zeal and courage, and have the happiness to see their best wishes fulfilled in the wide increasing spread of pure christian knowledge, and practical religion.

Rev. Artemas B. Muzzey, of Framingham, said he had derived pleasure from the kind, serious tone of the remarks, of those who had preceded him. He desired to encourage a spirit of kindness, not only toward those who differ from us, but those even who treat us with obloquy. A clergyman is supported in the labors and trials of his calling, not by his belief that the opposition he meets comes from bad motives, but by the consciousness of doing his own duty faithfully, of holding himself the truth, and cherishing a kind spirit towards all mankind. If such a spirit were more universally cherished, and a more free intercourse encouraged by christian brethren of different names, mutual benefit would be received. He believed that Unitarians had lost something to the cause they value, by refraining from some good measures, because they had been previously adopted by other denominations. If it be true that we have at any time betrayed this weakness, let us do it no longer. Let us show by our kind and christian spirit that we are the lovers of all men; and by our candor, that we are the lovers of all truth; and that in all our efforts in behalf of Unitarian Christianity, our most earnest desire and solemn purpose is to promote the highest practical efficacy of the gospel.

Rev. CHARLES BROOKS, of Hingham, addressed the meeting briefly, on the benefits which would result to the cause of Liberal Christianity from a greater attention to biblical learning. It was important that greater means be provided for the encouragement of thorough scholarship, with a view to a more accurate and perfect translation of the Scriptures.

Rev. JONATHAN FARR, of Gardner, followed Mr Brooks. We profess, said he, to hold the true christian faith, the faith of the three first centuries. Let me inquire, if we have the spirit of the believers of those times. Have we their strength of faith, and religious courage? He had been pleased with the promptness and zeal manifested by a Roman Catholic with whom he lately chanced to travel, in defending his faith when referred to in conversation. He desired to see all who profess the Unitarian faith, manifesting a similar readiness to vindicate the truth and the scriptural and saving character of their principles. Let Unitarians, wherever they go and hear their faith assailed and misrepresented, avow themselves Unitarians, — Unitarian Christians. And let them prove the correctness of their faith, not merely by words, but by exhibiting in their lives its fruits of piety and holy living.

Mr F. alluded to the lamentable progress of infidelity in our land. How shall we treat this unfortunate class of our fellow-citizens? Shall we come down upon them with harshness and crimination? Or shall we treat them with christian kindness and forbearance? He hoped none were in doubt what was our duty in this respect. Let us speak to their feelings. Let us show by the gen-

tleness and kindness of our demeanor towards them, as well as by the power of our arguments, that Christianity has a vital efficacy, a humanizing and elevating influence on the characters and tempers of those who truly receive it, and we shall thus win their attention to its evidences. Mr F. spoke of the want of books adapted to the minds of the doubting and disbelieving. He hoped this want might be soon supplied. In conclusion, he desired devoutly to thank God that he lived in a land where he could freely and without fear avow his belief in Unitarian Christianity.

Rev. CHARLES C. SEWALL, of Danvers, expressed the satisfaction he felt in having witnessed the animation, the zeal, and the truly christian spirit which had characterized the meetings of Tuesday and this evening, and his gratitude to God for the opportunity of joining with his brethren in expressions of mutual sympathy and encouragement in their christian labors. The consideration, that of those present some before another Anniversary will have passed to their final account, should stimulate all to diligence in the faithful discharge of duty, by laboring to extend more widely the knowledge and practical influence of the pure gospel of Christ.*

The motion for the acceptance of the Reports was then put, and passed unanimously; and after prayer by Rev. Dr Bancroft, the Association

Adjourned, *sine die*.

* In justice to the gentlemen who spoke at the *second* meeting it should be observed, that the above report of their remarks is nothing but a very brief abstract, and has not been submitted to their revision.

OFFICERS

OF THE

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

1832 — 33.

PRESIDENT.

Rev. AARON BANCROFT, D. D., of Worcester, Mass.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

Hon. JOSEPH STORY, Mass.
" JOSEPH LYMAN, "
" WILLIAM SULLIVAN, "
" CHARLES H. ATHERTON, N. H.
" STEPHEN LONGFELLOW, Maine.
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" SAMUEL HOAR, Jr. "
TIMOTHY FLINT, Esq. Ohio.

DIRECTORS.

Rev. JAMES WALKER,
" SAMUEL BARRETT,
" EZRA S. GANNETT.

Rev. HENRY WARE, Jr. *Foreign Secretary.*
" ALEXANDER YOUNG, *Domestic Secretary.*
HENRY RICE, Esq. *Treasurer.*

Communications respecting the payment of subscriptions or donations may be made to the Treasurer, Kilby Street, Boston. Negotiations for tracts should be conducted with the General Agents, Messrs GRAY & BOWEN, 141 Washington Street, Boston. All other domestic correspondence may be held with the Domestic Secretary.

APPENDIX.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

1. The name of this Association shall be The American Unitarian Association.

2. The objects of this Association shall be to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity throughout our country.

3. Unitarian Christians throughout the United States shall be invited to unite and coöperate with this Association.

4. An annual subscription of one dollar shall constitute a person a member so long as such subscription shall be paid, and a subscription of $30 shall constitute a person a member for life.

5. The officers shall be a President, fifteen Vice Presidents, a Secretary for foreign correspondence who shall be styled the Foreign Secretary, a Secretary for correspondence within the United States and for keeping the records of the Association who shall be called the Domestic Secretary, a Treasurer, and three Directors.

6. The Directors, Secretaries, and Treasurer, shall constitute the Executive Committee, who shall meet once in each month, and shall have the direction of the funds and operations of the Association.

7. An annual meeting shall be held at such time and place, as the Executive Committee shall deem advisable, of which due notice shall be given, and at which officers shall be chosen, reports be made, and any other business be transacted, which may come before the Association.

8. The Executive Committee shall have power to fill any vacancies which may occur among the officers between any two annual meetings.

9. Any amendments of this Constitution shall be proposed at one annual meeting, and may be accepted at the next anniversary, if two thirds of the members present be in favor of such amendments.

AMERICAN

UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

The Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association ask the attention of Liberal Christians to the claims of the Association. The objects contemplated by it are the diffusion and establishment of christian truth by fair and just means. At the period of its formation in 1825, the time seemed to have arrived, when the friends of Unitarian Christianity in this country, should adopt systematic measures in defence of their views of the Gospel. Religious sects about them were organized into societies, whose avowed purpose was the propagation of their peculiar tenets. It had been alleged against Unitarians, with no little inconsistency, that, while they employed unworthy arts to gain adherents, they were so indifferent to the truth which they professed to hold, as to make no

effort for its extension. It was also seen, that much labor was misspent, because it was insulated; that many who were far from a belief in the doctrine of the Trinity, remained inactive from the want of encouragement and sympathy; and that the whole community were deplorably ignorant of the grounds on which the simple faith of Unitarian Christianity was supported. The circumstances of the times seemed therefore, to demand 'a concentration of labors, by which interest would be awakened, confidence inspired, and efficiency produced.' In this project there was nothing to which the term sectarian could be in a bad sense applied. An activity and an energy hitherto unknown were pervading the christian world. Should we alone be idle and listless? Our hearts embraced the truth of Jesus with no less ardor than our brethren. Should we by our sluggishness give occasion to others to speak contemptuously of that which we most valued? It could not be. We were called upon by every principle of duty to ourselves and to our religion, to appear as its advocates. We were accountable for the progress of pure Christianity. God, in the operations of his moral government, acts through human agents, and by leading us in his Providence to those views of Christian doctrine, which we conceive to be genuine, he had imposed upon us a responsibleness which we could not cast off. Frankness and decision were as plainly commanded by our situation, as inquiry and liberality. What methods would most probably enable us to discharge our duty? We might join our exertions to those of other believers, and throw our contributions into their treasuries. But our labor and money would then be given to uphold those opinions which we regard as opposed to the simplicity of the Gospel, and prejudicial to the moral character of man. We must act by ourselves, and the experience of other portions of the christian church had taught us that association, though liable to abuse, was a means of strength and usefulness.

The American Unitarian Association was formed, we have said, in the single hope, that by its agency the truth might be diffused and established. The circulation of religious knowledge, and cordiality among the friends of Liberal Christianity, are the instruments by which these effects will be produced. Instruction is the great engine of improvement. Men read and listen, and if we would bring them to cherish our sentiments, we must afford them an opportunity of understanding those sentiments, and the arguments which prove their correctness. The publication of tracts is therefore one of the chief subjects of attention with the Directors of the Association. Their tracts will contain candid and dispassionate discussions of religious opinions; their character will be Unitarian and anti-Calvinistic; but it is hoped that they will present nothing that shall offend the impartial and serious inquirer. The want of tracts presenting the scriptural views of practical religion, such views as harmonize with the paternal government of God, and are suited to strengthen the religious principle, and to give it a constant influence, is felt to be very great, — this want will, as far as possible, be supplied. The support of preachers in destitute sections of our country, is another important object; the degree to which it may be carried must depend upon the funds at the disposal of the Association. That a greater spirit of union and cordiality may be awakened among Unitarians, a correspondence has commenced with gentlemen in different States. The annual meeting has been found to render essential benefit, by collecting members from distant places, who confer together, and by their presence, sympathy and mutual counsels, animate and strengthen one another. Such an assembly offers the best possible opportunity of devising means for any object, connected with the general purposes of the Association.

From this explanation it will be seen, that coöperation is essential to success. The Directors have been gratified by the approbation expressed. The sums, which have been re-

ceived for the Treasury, have surpassed expectation; for little has yet been done towards securing an annual receipt equal to the probable expenditure. We look to the voluntary exertions of the friends of truth. The Directors can do comparatively nothing in obtaining subscriptions; these must be offered and solicited by others. It is important that simplicity should, as far as possible, be introduced into the concerns of the Association. If subscribers in each town or parish will form themselves into Auxiliary Associations, and choose a treasurer, or if agents will collect and transmit subscriptions, they will relieve the Executive Committee from much anxiety. The subscription of each member will be considered as commencing with the beginning of the year in which it is paid. The necessity of this rule is obvious. Wherever auxiliary societies are formed, it is important that the terms should be the same as those of the general Association. Contributions will be acceptable from those who do not wish to enrol themselves among the subscribers. Ladies are invited to give assistance by making their pastors life members. Such aid has already been rendered in several instances, and will be acknowledged in the Christian Register. As the tracts of the Association are printed in fair type and are sold at the lowest possible price, we cannot but hope that many of them will be purchased for distribution. In this way, an individual may for a small sum obtain the means of doing good, and at the same time enable the Association to pursue its labors.

These details may be thought tedious; but they are presented as necessary to an effective coöperation. We close these remarks in the hope, that they will bring the purposes and plans of the Association distinctly before every reader; for we are convinced that a clear understanding of these alone is necessary to produce approbation and assistance.

[The following forms of Constitution, have been prepared for the convenience of Auxiliaries; either of which may be adopted according to the circumstances or views of each Auxiliary.]

CONSTITUTION.

ART. 1. THIS Association shall be styled the Association, auxiliary to the American Unitarian Association.

2. It shall be composed of persons who comply with the terms of membership of the American Unitarian Association, that is, of persons who contribute each $30 as a life subscription, or pay at least $1 annually to that Association.

3. The business of this auxiliary shall be intrusted to an Agent, who shall solicit and collect subscriptions, transmit the money received by him to the Treasurer of the General Association, receive the tracts furnished by the Executive Committee, and distribute them to the members.

CONSTITUTION.

ART. 1. THIS Association shall be styled the Association auxiliary to the American Unitarian Association.

2. Its objects shall be, in general, those of the American Unitarian Association, viz. 'to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity.'

3. It shall be composed of persons who comply with the terms of membership of the American Unitarian Association, that is, of persons who contribute each $30 as a life subscription, or pay at least $1 annually to that Association.

4. The officers shall be a President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Standing Committee of , which officers shall constitute a Board of Directors, who shall have the manage-

ment of the concerns of this auxiliary, shall correspond with the Executive Committee of the General Association, and shall make to them an annual Report.

5. It shall be the duty of the Standing Committee, to solicit and collect subscriptions, and to pay them over to the Treasurer, who shall transmit the money to the Treasurer of the General Association. The President shall preside at all meetings, and the Secretary record the proceedings.

6. An annual meeting shall be held for the choice of officers and other necessary business, and three other quarterly meetings for conference on the objects of the Association.

7. A Depository shall be established by the Board of Directors, subject to their control, at which any member of this Association may purchase tracts at per cent. discount.

The blanks in the fourth article may be filled with any number; a Standing Committee of three or five will however be found sufficiently large. At the annual meeting a public address may delivered, and if there should be no objections, a collection taken, that may be appropriated to the purchase of tracts for gratuitous distribution among the poorer families of the town, or be paid over to the treasury of the parent Association. The seventh article may often, perhaps generally, be omitted. According to its purport the Auxiliary acts as an agent, purchasing tracts, — besides those which are received for the members — at the established discount, and selling them at the same or at a greater or a less discount, as may be determined by the Directors.

It is desired, that whenever an Auxiliary is established, information of the fact, with a list of the officers' names, be communicated to the Domestic Secretary, and that the General Agents be also informed of the number of subscribers, and of the mode by which the tracts may be transmitted; the expense of which, it should be distinctly understood, must be borne by the Auxiliary.

Vote passed by the Executive Committee, September 23, 1826, as amended March 18, 1830.

'*Resolved*, That every member of the Association be entitled to one copy of every tract *of the first and second series* published by the Association *during the year for which his subscription is entered*.'

Vote of the Executive Committee, passed January 4, 1826.

'*Voted*, That no society be recognised as auxiliary to this Association, the terms of subscription to which are less than those required in the Constitution of this Association.'

CLERGYMEN MEMBERS FOR LIFE.

The following Clergymen have been made members for life of the American Unitarian Association, by the donation of thirty dollars or more, principally from ladies of their respective societies.

Alden, Seth,	Marlborough.
Bancroft, Aaron, D. D.	Worcester.
Barrett, Samuel,	Boston.
Bartlett, John,	Marblehead,
Bascom, Ezekiel L.	Ashby.
Brazer, John,	Salem.
Channing, Wm. E. D. D.	Boston.
Colman, Henry,	Greenfield.
Briggs, Charles,	Lexington.
Brooks, Charles,	Hingham.
Edes, Henry, D. D.	Providence, R. I.
Field, Joseph,	Weston.
Flint, James,	Salem.
Furness, Wm. H.	Philadelphia.

Gannett, Ezra S.	Boston.
Gannett, Thomas B.	Cambridge.
Greenwood, F. W. P.	Boston.
Hamilton, Luther,	Taunton.
Howe, Moses,	Portsmouth, N. H.
Ingersoll, George G.	Burlington, Vt.
Kendall, James, D. D.	Plymouth.
Lamson, Alvan,	Dedham.
Lincoln, Calvin,	Fitchburg.
*Little, Robert,	Washington, D. C.
Loring, Bailey,	Andover.
Nichols, Ichabod, D. D.	Portland, Me.
Palfrey, John G. Prof.	Cambridge.
Parker, Nathan, D. D.	Portsmouth, N. H.
Parkman, Francis,	Boston.
Pierpont, John,	"
Richardson, Joseph,	Hingham.
Ripley, George,	Boston.
Ripley, Samuel,	Waltham.
Robinson, Charles,	Groton.
Sewall, Charles C.	Danvers.
Storer, John P. B.	Walpole.
Stetson, Caleb,	Medford.
Sullivan, Thomas R.	Keene, N. H.
Walker, James,	Charlestown.
Ware, Henry, jr. Prof.	Cambridge.
Ware, William,	New York.
Wells, George W.	Kennebunk, Me.
Whitman, Bernard,	Waltham.
Young, Alexander,	Boston.

* Dead.

OTHER MEMBERS FOR LIFE.

Abbott, Samuel,	Milford.
Atherton, Charles H.	Amherst, N. H.
Bond, George,	Boston.
Davis, Charles S.	Portland, Me.
Everett, Otis,	Boston.
Fisher, Joshua, M. D.	Beverly.
Fitch, Jeremiah,	Boston.
Hedge, Barnabas,	Plymouth.
Lawrence, Amos,	Boston.
May, Samuel,	"
Otis, Harrison G.	"
Peabody, Joseph,	Salem.
Peele, Willard,	"
Phillips, Stephen C.	"
Pickman, Benj.	"
Pickman, Dudley L.	"
Preble, Wm. B.	Portland.
Rantoul, Robert,	Beverly.
Rice, Henry,	Boston.
Saunders, Elizabeth,	Salem.
Story, Joseph,	Cambridge.
Sullivan, William,	Boston.
Tuckerman, Gustavus,	"
White, Daniel A.	Salem.
Willis, William,	Portland.

ASSOCIATIONS AUXILIARY

TO THE

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

MAY 29, 1832.

Town.	*Agent.*
Amesbury,	James Homer.
Andover, North,	James Stevens, 2d.
Augusta, Me.	Rev. Allen Putman.
Barre,	Charles Wadsworth, Esq.
Beverly,	Wm. Endicott.
Billerica,	Rev. Nathaniel Whitman.
Boston,	
Brattle-street Church,	A. F. Sumner.
New South "	Rev. A. Young.
Federal-street "	L. H. Marsh.
Second "	I. Kahler.
Purchase-street "	H. P. Fairbanks.
Twelfth Cong. "	Lewis G. Pray.
South " "	O. Faxon.
Hollis-street "	John Emmons.
New North "	
Bridgewater,	Artemas Hale, Esq.
Bridgewater, East	S. L. Mitchell.
Brooklyn, Conn.	James B. Whitcomb.
Cambridge,	W. J. Whipple, Esq.
Cambridge, East,	Ralph Smith.
Cambridgeport,	N. P. Hunt.
Canton,	Rev. Henry F. Edes.

Cincinnati, Ohio,	Wm. P. Rice.
Cohasset,	Rev. Jacob Flint.
Concord,	John Stacy.
Danvers,	A. Trask, Jr.
Dedham,	Rev. Alvan Lamson.
Dorchester, 3d Parish,	" Dr Richmond.
Dover, N. H.	Samuel C. Stevens.
Duxbury,	Rev. Benjamin Kent.
Eastport, Me.	Frederick Hobbs, Esq.
Fall River,	Samuel L. Thaxter.
Framingham,	Josiah Adams.
Groton,	Amos Bancroft.
Hardwick,	Dr Joseph Stone.
Hallowell,	Glazier & Co.
Harvard,	Eliakim A. Holman.
Haverhill,	Dr Rufus Longley.
Hingham,	
First Parish,	Hon. Solomon Lincoln.
Second and Third do.	
Hubbardston,	Rev. Abner D. Jones.
Keene, N. H.	George Tilden.
Kennebunk, Me.	Rev. George W. Wells.
Kingston,	
Lancaster,	Ezra Sawyer.
Leicester,	George Whiting.
Leominster,	Hon. David Wilder.
Lynn,	Amos Rhoades.
Marlboro',	Rev. Seth Alden.

Meadville, Penn.	H. G. Huidekoper.
Milton,	Thomas Snow.
Newburyport,	T. B. & E. L. White.
Northboro',	Rev. Joseph Allen.
Pembroke,	Anthony Collamore.
Peterboro', N. H.	Rev. Abiel Abbot.
Plymouth,	" Dr Kendall.
Providence, R. I.	" F. A. Farley.
Roxbury, 1st Parish,	Wm. Whiting.
Salem, Barton Square Soc.	Adrian Low.
Sandwich,	Rev. E. S. Goodwin.
Scituate, North,	" E. Q. Sewall.
Springfield,	E. Edwards.
Sterling,	Dr Luther Allen.
Stow,	Rev. John L. Sibley.
Taunton,	George A. Crocker.
Templeton,	Thomas G. Waite.
Trenton, N. Y.	Rev. I. B. Pierce.
Uxbridge,	Jonathan Gregory, Esq.
Walpole,	Rev. J. P. B. Storer.
Watertown,	" Convers Francis.
Westboro',	Onslow Peters, Esq.

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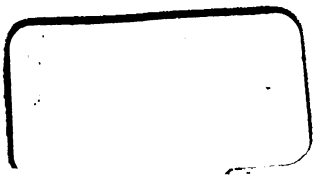
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